



# DMS Newsflash

January 2021

## Growth Mindset

### HELPING TO PROMOTE A GROWTH MINDSET WITH YOUR CHILD

Dear Parents & Guardians,

As we approach the winter months and move into a new calendar year, it is a great opportunity for us to remind our students about the importance of having a growth mindset. We are quite certain all of our students have been facing challenges as they learn, grow, and live through the pandemic. While there are varying degrees of challenges, it is our goal for every DMS student to develop resiliency and a positive growth mindset. We desire for our students to gain the ability to never give up, look at failure as a necessary learning opportunity, and develop the understanding that hard work and effort will help them move forward in school and life.

In the school environment, you can expect your child's teachers to encourage them to take on challenges, praise hard work and effort, and have the general belief that ability is not fixed. Through encouragement and positive and actionable feedback, we believe our students will grow more and take appropriate academic risks to increase their learning. We will work to help your child attain a growth mindset over a fixed mindset.

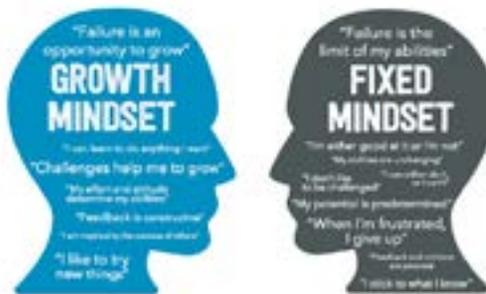


IMAGE FROM THE MEDIUM.COM

### HOW CAN YOU HELP OUT AT HOME?

With students spending at least some or all of their learning time at home, they are spending an unprecedented amount of time in the presence of their parents, guardians, and caregivers as they engage in their learning activities. Children are constantly looking for cues from parents, teachers, and adults they trust about how to act and behave. The best thing you can do to help build your child's growth mindset is to model positive thoughts and actions when you engage in various tasks, whether they be challenges at work, difficulty fixing something at home, or helping your child solve a math problem in a way that you've never learned before. Showing your child that you believe in on-going learning, growth, and perseverance will serve as a great example for him/her when facing difficult tasks and challenges.



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## Important Dates

### January

- 4-8 Full Distance Learning for all students
- 11-15 Return of Hybrid Learning Model
  - 11 & 12 Cohort A
  - 14 & 15 Cohort B
- 12 PTO Meeting (VIRTUAL)
- 14 Board of Education Meeting •  
District Office • 7 PM
- 18 No School • Martin Luther King Day  
Observance
- 29 Spirit Day • Tie Dye Day



### February

- 1 & 5 Picture Retake Day
- 11 Board of Education Meeting •  
District Office • 7 PM
- 15-16 Presidents' Day Observance •  
No School
- 23 Sports Day • Wear clothing or a jersey  
from your favorite sports team



## New! Parent Square

### Welcome to Parent Square

Parent Square is a communication and collaboration tool that is being used throughout Stonington Public Schools. It allows users to communicate through email, text, and posts regarding important schoolwide updates and/or grade level information. Deans Mill School is beginning the implementation process. This program will help us streamline communication.

### Parent Square Overview for Parents (Video - 2:43)

We encourage parents/families to download the Parent Square app and to register with Parent Square. You will begin to receive notifications via email from Parent Square as we move forward with implementation.

Want to learn more? Visit [Parent How To articles](#) as well as this [Parent 101 training module](#) for more information about Parent Square.

Download the  
**ParentSquare app today!**

Stay involved with your child's learning  
and activities at school. From anywhere.



ParentSquare



### Stonington Public School Equity Update

An update from the district on continuing work to support our Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) across all buildings.

In January, the District will be reporting to the Town of Stonington's DEI Work Group on the work in the school system specific to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion professional learning, projects, presentations, and future goals.

The Anti-Bias Anti-Racism Team is meeting with Dr. Gerald Hairston, a DEI consultant with the Capitol Region Education Center to plan embedded professional development experiences for our teachers of preK-12 in March and next fall. The first session in March will follow a panel discussion featuring Stonington High School alumni speaking about their experiences within the school system as members of the BIPOC community. Dr. Hairston will be addressing the faculty and staff at the convocation ceremony at the start of the next school year about the relevancy of creating an anti-racist school community.

January 2021

## Healthy DMS Community

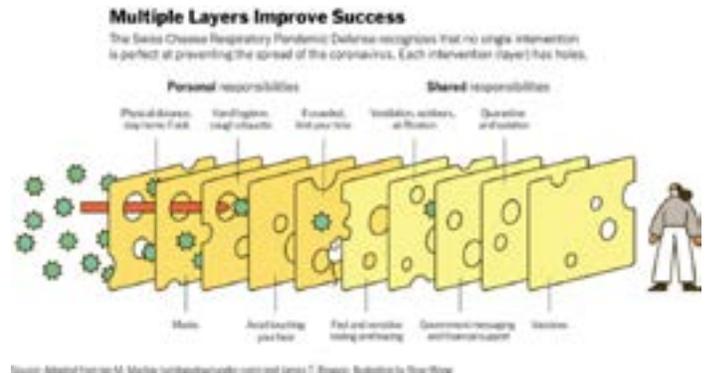
Our goal is to keep DMS healthy and in school! We are asking that you continue to follow the [Parent/Family Responsibility Form - Health Safety Requirements](#) which includes the [Connecticut Travel Advisory](#).

\*\*\*Notify the school nurse with the date of your return to Connecticut and if you plan on testing or are planning to quarantine. \*\*\*

Families, students and staff are doing a fantastic job adhering to the guidelines and it is working! The incidence of spread within the DMS community has been minimal. Keep up the good work!

## Pandemic Defense Swiss Cheese Model

I love this [Pandemic Defense Swiss Cheese Model](#)! It really shows how all of the efforts at Deans Mill School are proving to be successful for in school learning! Families, please continue to do your part!



## How to Select, Wear, and Clean Your Mask

As a reminder, Stonington Public Schools does not allow the use of neck gaiters or masks with exhalation valves. Some say that you should change your mask as often as you change your underwear! Here are some reminders of [how to protect yourselves and others from COVID-19](#).

## Change of Clothes

We continue to have children who come to the nurse looking for a change of clothes due to a spill or other accident. If clothing has been provided by the school for your child, please wash and return. We are in need of boys' underwear and pants! Students in **all grades** should have a change of clothing (shirt, pants, undergarments, socks, and sneakers) to be kept in their lockers. Milk spills! Thank you.

## Hearing and Vision Referrals

Hearing and vision greatly affects your child's ability to learn. Please follow up as soon as possible with any referrals and notify the nurse of appointment dates and outcomes of the visit. Submit the completed referral to the nurse as soon as possible so that we can best help your child at school.

## Flu Shots

Flu shots are recommended by the CDC. Study suggests [flu vaccine may lower risk for severe COVID-19](#).

Keep doing your part and continue to keep the DMS community **healthy!** We are in this together!



Nurse Lori  
DMSnurse@stoningtonschools.org

## Health care plan coverage enrollment period extended

### Access Health Announces Annual Open Enrollment Period Extension

As a result of the current health crisis, Access Health CT extended the 2021 Annual Open Enrollment period until **January 15, 2021**, providing more time for CT residents to get covered.

#### There are two important things to know:

1. If individuals **choose a plan** during the extension, the coverage will start on February 1, 2021.
2. If customers are already covered by an insurance plan through Access Health CT for January 2021 and would like to pick a **new plan** starting in February 2021, they must first pay their January monthly bill (premium).

Access Health CT will continue to offer free enrollment help to all Connecticut residents during the extension.

- **Online:** [AccessHealthCT.com](https://AccessHealthCT.com) (Live chat: AccessHealthCT.com click "Live Chat" icon)
- **Phone:** 1-855-805-4325, Mon. - Fri. 8 AM - 6 PM, Sat. 9 AM-3 PM
- With **Certified Brokers or Enrollment Specialists** [in your community](#).
- At a time that works for you at a **Virtual Enrollment Fair\***, more information [here](#).  
\*Holidays may impact this schedule.
- **In-Person** at an Enrollment Location\* in Groton, Bridgeport, New Haven, New Britain, Stamford, or Hartford by appointment only. For more information click [here](#).

Access Health CT is the state's official health insurance marketplace, where you can shop, compare, and enroll in quality healthcare plans. It is the only place where you can qualify for financial help to lower your costs or be eligible for free or low-cost coverage through HUSKY Health (Medicaid/Children's Health Insurance Program). You may qualify to enroll right now. To compare plan options or for more information visit [AccessHealthCT.com](https://AccessHealthCT.com) or call 855-805-4325.

#### IMPORTANT HEALTH & SAFETY REMINDER!



Parents/Staff are reminded to contact school nurse or admin (even when we are participating in full distance learning) related to COVID test results & symptoms related to COVID. All staff and students must adhere to CT Travel Advisory quarantine at:

<https://portal.ct.gov/Coronavirus/travel>

Jenn McCurdy, Principal:  
jmcurdy@stoningtonschools.org

Tom Bousquet, Assistant Principal  
tbousquet@stoningtonschools.org

Lori Tavares, DMS School Nurse  
ltavares@stoningtonschools.org



# Specials Update

Our goal for the year is to keep families informed about grade level curriculum in Art, Library, 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Band, Music, and Physical Education, and how they can support their children at home.

## Art

*Miss Biernacki*



Happy New Year! The start of a new year is a great time to set new resolutions. You and your children can incorporate art into the new year by participating in art challenges such as drawing in a sketchbook for five minutes a day. You can make sketch time more exciting by adding challenges like the three-marker challenge, drawing upside down, drawing with both hands at the same time, or drawing without lifting the pencil - the possibilities are endless! Drawing challenges help inspire creativity and push you out of your comfort zone. Have fun with it!

## Music

*Mrs. McMinn*



Happy New Year! Now is a great time to make a resolution to incorporate new or different ways to include music in your life. How can your child and family do that? Here are a few suggestions: learn how to play an instrument, create a family "band" (if you don't have instruments, you can use household items for musical "instruments"), or listen to different styles of music (at my house we match the music to the cuisine at dinner). Have fun and challenge yourself to try new musical things in 2021!

## Library

*Mrs. Anderson-Halbert*



Happy 2021! My resolution this year is to read more books! (Shocking for a librarian, I know!) With the hustle and bustle of life, it's often overlooked how relaxing and rewarding reading together can be. Try adding in some family reading time together, like reading a magazine or article about an activity you enjoy or something you wanted to learn more about together. Read your own books while your children read theirs, or try reading a book you enjoyed when you were younger out loud to your children. It's always fun to share new stories and ideas together, and if you need more reading material, the local libraries are still open for curbside pick up!

## Physical Education

*Mrs. LaPalme*



Happy New Year! Creating resolutions can be a great way to get your family to be active and eat healthy during this new year. Come up with some challenges or activities that you can do as a family. This can be as simple as going for a walk as a family each night or playing an active game like Just Dance together. You could have a new food challenge as a family where you try a new item each week! There are so many options out there to have fun and be active together!

# WINTER BOOTS FOR STONINGTON YOUTH

*A local effort to expand upon the work of TVCCA/RSVP's Santa Anonymous Boot Program.*

Stonington Human Services is currently collecting names of school-age children in need of a new pair of warm, winter boots.

To sign a child up for the program OR to sponsor a child in need, please email:  
[LTheodore@stonington-ct.gov](mailto:LTheodore@stonington-ct.gov)



The P.T.O would like to wish the DMS community a Happy New Year. We hope that everyone had a wonderful holiday and we are looking forward to the year ahead. Although we don't have any upcoming events or projects in the near future, we are always thinking of ways to help support our students & teachers. In light of that, we do have a request to the Board of Education to move onto phase two for the outdoor classroom, which has been a positive highlight of our current school year.

We would like to thank all of our parents and staff for the continued support during these unpredictable times. We look forward to getting back to all of our fun events & activities when the time is right. We will keep you updated should anything new arise, and hope to see you at our next Virtual P.T.O meeting.

Sincerely,

Katie Quinlan, PTO President  
 Jenni Adkins, PTO Vice President  
 Tracy Brunelle, PTO Treasurer  
 Jen Flynn, PTO Secretary



## EARN CASH FOR YOUR SCHOOL

LITTLE BY LITTLE WE CAN MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE.

The Box Tops mobile app uses state-of-the-art technology to scan your store receipt, find participating products and instantly add Box Tops to your school's earnings online.

LOOK FOR THE LABEL:



## HERE'S HOW IT WORKS:



**BUY**  
**BOX TOPS PRODUCTS**

You can find Box Tops on hundreds of products throughout the store.



**SCAN**  
**YOUR RECEIPT**

Use the app to snap a photo of your receipt within 14 days of purchase.



**EARN**  
**CASH FOR YOUR SCHOOL**

Box Tops earnings are identified and automatically updated online.

## SHOPPING FOR GROCERIES ONLINE?

You can still earn Box Tops for your school with your e-receipt!  
 See how at [BTFE.com/emailgroceryreceipts](https://www.btfec.com/emailgroceryreceipts)



## BOX TOPS CLIPS

You may occasionally find an old Box Tops clip on packages in stores. You can still clip them and send them to school, as long as each clip has a valid expiration date.

SEE PRODUCTS & LEARN MORE ABOUT THE BOX TOPS APP AT [BTFE.COM](https://www.btfec.com)

DON'T HAVE THE BOX TOPS APP YET? DOWNLOAD IT NOW:



## Dear Families and Friends of Deans Mill School,

As you know the PTO works hard each year to bring your child great activities and events, as well as purchase many supplies for Deans Mill School.

With this being such an unusual time in everyone's lives, we need to limit the ways we can raise funds for our school and stay safe.

The funds raised through the **Annual Appeal** are often what allow us to go beyond the basics and provide materials and experiences that further enrich your child's education. This of course is only made possible by the generous support of our parents.

### What does the PTO provide funds for?

Some of the great things DMS PTO has provided the past years included:

- ≈ **Assemblies for Cultural Enrichment** ≈\$3000≈
- ≈ **Author & Illustrator Day** ≈\$2,000≈
- ≈ **Books for the School Library and Classrooms**
- ≈ **Field Trips for all grades** ≈\$8,500≈
- ≈ **Ice Cream Social at end of year**≈
- ≈ **Kindergarten Orientation**≈
- ≈ **Movie Nights**≈
- ≈ **Recess equipment for all grades**≈
- ≈ **Math & Science Fair**≈
- ≈ **Science and Technology Day** ≈\$1,500≈
- ≈ **Teacher supplies** ≈\$5,000≈
- ≈ **Teacher & Staff appreciation days**



To double a donation without spending more of your own money, many companies match employee donations made to nonprofit organizations, including DMS PTO.

You may send checks made out to "DMSPTO" to the school office in an envelope labeled "**ANNUAL APPEAL**"

You may also donate by choosing the following PayPal link or [deansmillschoolpto@gmail.com](mailto:deansmillschoolpto@gmail.com) and send payment with "**FRIENDS OR FAMILY**" option so that we may avoid fees.

[https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted\\_button\\_id=8QFTHPMHNVTC](https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=8QFTHPMHNVTC).

The Annual Appeal runs throughout the year.

The PTO is dedicated to making Deans Mill School better than ever, but we need your help. Please consider a gift to the DMS PTO to support and enrich our children's education. We would like to thank you in advance for your donation.

Sincerely,

Katie Quinlan  
President  
DMS PTO

Jenni Adkins  
Vice President  
DMS PTO

Jennifer Flynn  
Secretary  
DMS PTO

Tracy Brunelle  
Treasurer  
DMS PTO Annual Appeal Chair

**Let friends and extended family members know about our Appeal so they can help too!**

## DMS Families and Friends

Do you ever purchase items from Amazon?  
Do you ever buy food from Stop & Shop?

If the answer is 'yes' to either of these...  
will you donate **5 minutes of your time** to provide ongoing financial support to your child's education? That's all it takes to sign up for programs at Amazon Smile and at Stop & Shop! (Note that Amazon Smile works exactly the same way as Amazon, and that all of your orders and lists show up exactly the same way on both. Just sign up, then log onto [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) instead of [amazon.com](https://amazon.com). So easy!) It would hard to find a reason not to support the schools in this way. There is nothing you have to do other than sign up!

### Smile.Amazon.com



The AmazonSmile Foundation recently surpassed \$200 million in donations to charities world-wide! Our thanks go out to you, Deans Mill Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization supporters, and every supporter who shops at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com). This is a great moment to remind you to continue generating donations for Deans Mill Elementary School Parent Teacher Organization by shopping at [smile.amazon.com/ch/20-1092780](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/20-1092780) or with AmazonSmile ON in the Amazon Shopping app.

### How to select a charitable organization to support when shopping on AmazonSmile:

On your first visit to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com), you need to select your charitable organization, **Deans Mill Elementary School PTO**, to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make through AmazonSmile will result in a donation.  
**It couldn't be easier!**



**\$200 million donated to charities**

Shop at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) or with AmazonSmile ON in the Amazon Shopping app to generate donations.

 **amazonsmile**



## DEANS MILL SCHOOL PTO

Dear Supporter:

Welcome back to the start of a new school year and to a new year of A+ School Rewards! This year's A+ Program runs from August 7, 2020 through March 13, 2021.

Our school, Deans Mill School, **ID#:07852** has the opportunity to participate in and earn **CASH** from A+ School Rewards, a great fundraising program run through your local Stop & Shop!

### **Former Supporters:**

You DO NOT need to re-register your card if your school selection(s) remains the same as last year.

### **New Supporters or Existing Supporters Wishing to Make Changes:**

- Beginning *July 1, 2020*, visit [stopandshop.com](http://stopandshop.com) and select "SIGN IN" at the top right to log into your online account. Once logged in, you may select or modify your school choice. • If you do not have an online account, visit [stopandshop.com](http://stopandshop.com) and click "REGISTER". Follow the prompts to create your online account. Once logged in, follow the same instructions as noted above.
- You'll need your 13-digit STOP & SHOP CARD number and the School ID number. If you need assistance, call 1-877-366-2668 option 1.

### **To earn points:**

- Use your registered STOP & SHOP CARD each time you shop at any Stop & Shop, and you will earn CASH for our school. You can confirm your school selection by logging into your account. • Earn points when shopping on line (delivery or pick up).
- At the end of each month, your points are calculated and converted to CASH rewards. These CASH rewards for our school are updated monthly. You can track our progress when you sign in to your online account.
- Our school will receive one CASH rewards check at the end of the program and can use this cash for any of our educational needs.

Also, please encourage your family members and friends to support our school. This could result in more cash rewards for our school!

Thank you for supporting our school.

