



DMS Newsflash

J u n e 2 0 2 1

Close of the 2020-21 School Year

Dear Parents & Guardians,

As we approach the end of the school year, we are reflecting upon the various triumphs and challenges this past year has presented to our entire community. It is clear that the COVID 19 pandemic impacted all of us in a variety of ways. Despite the challenges we faced, we are proud of the progress our students were able to make under the circumstances, and appreciate the strong partnerships we have with our families.

Here are some highlights from the 2020-21 school year:

- 🍏 Our students showed outstanding resiliency as we moved between hybrid learning, distance learning, and full in-person learning.
- 🍏 Parent/Guardian willingness to collaborate with us and provide an optimal at-home learning environment for their child when they could not be in school.
- 🍏 Our staff's ability and desire to support students in any circumstance.
- 🍏 Successful implementation of the Read to Succeed Program on Wednesdays for our Kindergarten and 1st grade students who needed an extra boost to build foundational reading skills.
- 🍏 The school district hiring tutors to prevent learning gaps for identified students and DL students when necessary.
- 🍏 Our school implemented the Second Step Program for students in Grades K through 5 to help put an emphasis on Social Emotional Learning. This program will continue in the 2021-22 school year.
- 🍏 A team effort by all individuals to follow safety protocols, social distance, wear masks, and wash hands throughout the school day.
- 🍏 Parent/Guardian support of safety protocols and understanding with quarantining was appreciated.

This school year certainly presented obstacles we have not previously faced, and we could not have done it without your support. As we plan for next year, we ask you to take a few minutes to complete the Parent Climate Survey (sent via Parent Square) to offer us your perspective on this past year. As we get updates from the State of Connecticut, Ledge Light Health District, and the Stonington Public Schools, we will communicate them out to do.

Thank you for your support!

Happy Summer!
Jenn & Tom



What's Inside

1

Greetings from the Administration

2

Important Dates

Paraeducator of the Year

3

Specials Update

4

Nurse's Notes

6

Summer Activities

8

PTO News

Important Dates

June

- 10 Field Day at DMS
 - *Rain date is June 11
- 10 Board of Education Meeting
 - District Office • 7 PM
- 17 5th Grade Party
- 18 Last day of school
 - Dismissal at 12:10 PM



Stonington Middle School
Summer Academy 2021
Incoming Grades 6-8



July 6-8
July 13-15
July 20-22
July 27-29
August 3-5

8:30 AM - 12:15 PM
Classes held at Stonington High School

You do not need to attend all 5 weeks to participate

Paraeducator of the Year

Paraeducator of the Year

We are pleased to announce that Lynn Cripps has been named the 2022 Stonington Public Schools Paraeducator of the Year!

Lynn, who serves as a paraeducator at Deans Mill School, exemplifies the characteristics of an outstanding educator on a daily basis. She approaches every task with a positive attitude and is always willing to help out in any situation.



LYNN CRIPP RECEIVES HER AWARD

Please join us in extending a heartfelt congratulations to Lynn for her dedication and commitment to Deans Mill School and the Stonington Public Schools!

Please remember to complete the 2020-21 Parent Climate Survey that was shared out via Parent Square.

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

Miss Biernacki

Art



Here are a few art activities to enjoy this summer!

- **Extracurricular art classes.** Some of the local museums in this area, such as the Mystic Museum of Art and Lyman Allen, have art classes for students of all ages. The COMO also offers art classes.
- **Keep a sketchbook.** Any notebook will do. Students can sketch pictures of their travels and activities. It can also be an exploration notebook for children who love to be in the woods.
- **Art for Kids Hub.** On rainy days, visit artforkidshub.com for hundreds of guided drawing videos. There is sure to be something that fits every interest.

Music

Mrs. McMinn



Here are a few fun musical things you can do this summer!

- **Attend a concert,** whether it be in person or online. There are some outdoor events happening with live music and sometimes they are even streamed live online. Keep your eyes on social media or the newspaper for concert listings.
- **Practice an instrument or sing.** Put on a concert at your house or stream it online for your friends and family.
- **Dance!** Have a dance contest or play "Freeze Dance." Dance, and when the music stops, "freeze" or you are out! Whatever you choose to do, enjoy your summer!

Library

Mrs. Anderson-Halbert



We are so lucky to have three public libraries that serve our community. Each library is having a Summer Reading Program running in a variety of COVID-safe ways and doing curbside pickup of books as well as browsing at this time. You can sign up for a library card online as well. They all have ways to check out ebooks and e-audiobooks, too.

Please check out the **Mystic-Noank Library** website at <https://www.mysticnoanklibrary.org/> to find out more about their summer reading and to pick up books.

The **Stonington Free Library** has a video about their Summer Reading Program: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wh4k1swDSSw>. They have more information about their curbside pick-up, browsing protocols, storytimes, and ebooks app at <https://www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org/>.

The **Westerly Public Library** has a video about their Summer Reading Programs. Here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ztdnMVosOH0>. Check out their website for more information about summer reading and their many fun programs at <https://www.westerlylibrary.org/>. Any Stonington, Pawcatuck, or Mystic (Stonington side) resident can get a Westerly Library card.

Physical Education

Mrs. LaPalme



There are many great ways to stay active over the summer.

- **Go for hikes** through various parks around the state. Find a place and go exploring.
- **Create your own scavenger hunt** in nature.
- **Find a sports camp** to take part in.
- **Go swimming.** It can keep you cool and active!



Scoliosis screenings for grade 5 girls

The State of Connecticut mandates that school nurses conduct postural screenings for **female** students in Grade 5. School nurses performed this screening on **June 8, 2021**.

The purpose of this program is to recognize the signs of spinal curvature at its earliest stages so that the need for treatment can be determined. Specifically, scoliosis is a sideways curvature of the spine. In its early years, it is painless and develops gradually, especially during the years of rapid adolescent growth. Kyphosis, sometimes called round back, is an exaggerated forward bend of the spine and is often confused with poor posture. Many cases of curvature of the spine are mild and require only ongoing observation by a doctor after the first diagnosis. Others get progressively more severe as the child grows and requires active treatment. Early treatment can prevent the development of a severe deformity that can affect a person's appearance and health. Each student will be screened individually by school nurses. The nurses inspect the student's spine as s/he stands and then bends forward. The student's entire back from shoulders to hips needs to be observed without covering. Girls should be observed wearing a two-piece bathing suit top or bra.

If you have any questions, please contact your child's school nurse.

End of year medication pick up

All medication must be picked up by the parent/guardian at the end of the school year. Any remaining medication not picked up will be destroyed. Please see the nurse for any questions that you may have.

Kindergarten Registration

If your child is eligible to start Kindergarten in the fall, please make sure the nurse has a copy of the most recent health assessment and immunization records.

Health Tips and Safety tips from the nurse

Preventing Sunburn

Sunburn can happen within 15 minutes of being in the sun, but the redness and discomfort may not be noticed for a few hours. Don't forget to apply sunscreen to your children prior to going outside to play.

Shoes

For safety of the children on the playground and climbing stairs in the building, we request children **not wear flip flops or slip-on shoes** while at school.

Recess

Students will be going outside every day for recess now that spring has arrived. Remember to dress your children appropriately for the weather.

Tick Season

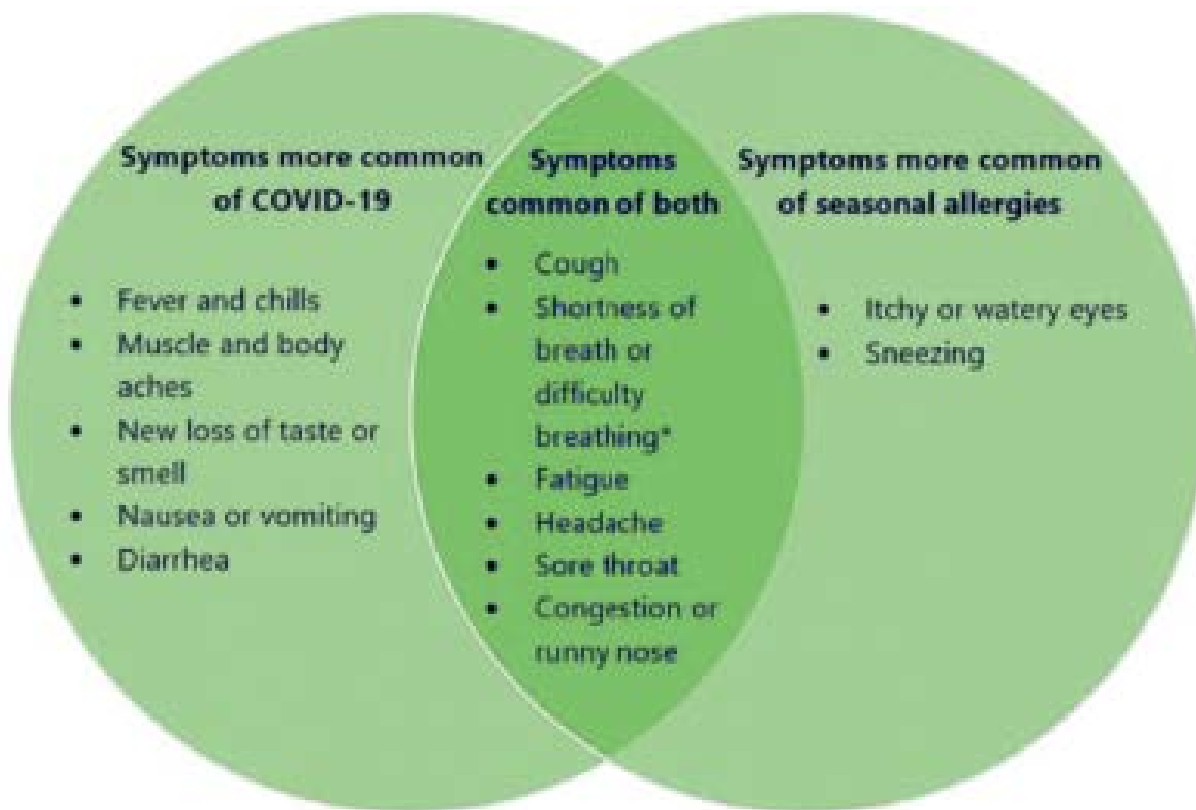
There have already been spotting of ticks found on staff and students. Please be sure that you are checking your child regularly.

How can I prevent Lyme disease?

Check yourself and your family daily for ticks. Look especially in the hair, at areas of the body that bend, in the belly button, in and around the ears, and where pants/underwear waistbands touch the skin. Dress in long-sleeved shirts and long pants, and tuck the pants into socks whenever possible when playing in woods or in tall grass. Use products that are tick-repellent on your skin while outdoors, and treat your clothing with a product that contains permethrin.

Allergy season VS COVID-19

As you know, allergy season is here in New England. Please be advised that many symptoms are also consistent with COVID-19. Please be sure to check with your child's doctor and manage symptoms accordingly. If your child needs to take allergy medicine, please remember to give it to him or her before school.



As the 2020-2021 school year comes to an end, I want to thank all of the families, students, and staff for doing such a fantastic job keeping our DMS community **healthy!**

Please continue to wear your mask, keep a 6-foot distance, and wash your hands! Keep doing your part and continue to! We are in this together!

Have a **great** summer!



Nurse Lori
DMSnurse@stoningtonschools.org



Here is a sample of some summer camp and enrichment opportunities within our community.

Denison Pequotsepos Nature Center

An outdoor adventure where campers spend their days hiking & exploring the local habitat, while learning about natural history, playing games & developing an appreciation for the environment.

<https://dpnc.org/>

Mystic Aquarium

Mystic Aquarium offers the perfect environment to enjoy and explore animals while having outdoor adventures in nature. In addition, each camp will have its own dedicated classroom within the Milne Ocean Science and Conservation Center, which is separated from the general public, to continue learning and exploration.

<https://www.mysticaquarium.org/learn-2020/summer-camps-2021/>

Mystic Museum of Art

Located in downtown Mystic. Camp offerings provide a wonderful introduction to a variety of visual art forms from drawing and painting to 3D sculpture, crafting, & more. Select from the Junior Studio camps or try out a themed Specialty camp in your area of interest.

<https://www.mysticmuseumofart.org/learn/summer-camps/>

Mystic & Noank Library

Contactless pickup of materials, digital library (includes ebooks, audiobooks, movies, music, newspapers, magazines etc), digital cooking classes & drawing workshop.

<https://www.mysticnoanklibrary.org/>

Mystic Seaport

Mystic Seaport Museum offers a number of summer camp programs that provide a unique learning adventure where meeting new friends is fun and easy. Their wide selection of Summer Day Camps offers boys and girls ages 4 to 16.

<https://www.mysticseaport.org/learn/summer-camps/>

Nearby activities/attractions

Some of these ideas are great for a family activity or day trip!

<https://www.familydaysout.com/kids-things-to-do-usa/stonington/ct>

New England Science and Sailing

Located in Stonington borough, NESS offers ocean based experiential programs, which include marine science, sailing, powerboating, & adventure sports!

nessf.org

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Stonington Como

Camp Como is offering 10 weeks of fun beginning June 21! Additionally, they offer athletic, STEAM, & many more enrichment/add-on camp options!

<https://www.thecomo.org/summer>

Stonington Free Library

Summer reading programs!

<https://www.stoningtonfreelibrary.org/my-library/youth/>

Stonington Human Services

The Recreation Division within the Human Services Department serves all the residents within the town of Stonington & provides a range of recreational opportunities for youth.

www.stonington-ct.gov

Terra Firma Farm

Frolick the field, pastures, barn while learning how to grow food & become a good farmer with hands-on activities & creative activities.

<http://www.terrafirmafarm.org/>

Virtual Activities for Families

Many popular Connecticut attractions continue to offer a wide array of virtual activities including live animal web-cams, arts & crafts classes, science demonstrations and yoga classes.

<https://www.ctvisit.com/articles/virtual-activities-families>

Virtual Summer Camps

A collection of virtual camps/activities including: STEM, Cooking, Film-making, Theater & more!

<https://mommypoppins.com/camps/online-summer-camps-kids-STEM-arts>

Westerly Library & Wilcox Park

Offering kids & teen programming.

<https://westerlylibrary.org/>

Yellow Farmhouse Education Center

Cooking classes, Farm Activities, Nature Crafts & More! Includes virtual cooking classes and Take & Make Arts & Crafts activities. Watch their website for updates.

<https://www.yellowfarmhouse.org/kids-cooking-classes>

YMCA

YMCA camp activities are designed to build character by instilling our values; caring, honesty, respect, and responsibility. Programs for campers age 4 to entering 10th grade.

<http://oceancommunityymca.org/locations/camp-cove/>

Draft: PTO Meeting Minutes May 11, 2021

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 6:31 p.m. by PTO President, Katie Quinlan.

2. In Attendance

Principal- Jenn McCurdy, *Vice Principal-* Tom Bousquet, *PTO President-* Katie Quinlan, *PTO Vice President-* Jenni Adkins, *PTO Treasurer-* Tracy Brunelle, *PTO Secretary-* Jen Flynn, Ashely Tewell, Merin Troutman, Pam Choquette, and Tracy Strelczuk. Introductions were made.

3. Secretary's Report Approval

Reviewed PTO Meeting Minutes from previous meeting. Motion to approve by Merin Troutman. Second by Ashley Tewell. All in favor unanimous.

4. Treasurer Report Approval

Beginning balance of \$46,118.32. Ending balance of \$53,911.80. Motion to approve by Tracey Strelczuk. Second by Jenni Adkins. All in favor unanimous.

5. New Business

Principal's Report given by Jenn McCurdy.

- Students continue to acclimate into classes of 20-25 after distance learning for a good portion of this school year. Going very well.
- Testing has begun for students in grades 3-5. Makeups will be held after regular testing.
- Planning has begun for budget and hiring for next school year.
- COVID Recovery plan has been put together in regard to hiring for needed positions at DMS. Hiring process will be held for an academic interventionist. This individual will assist with COVID related gaps in learning with students that need the extra help. This will make a total of 4 interventionists at DMS.
- Exploring Instrumental Enrichment for next year. Hiring for this position has been put on hold.
- Hiring for paraprofessionals as well. One 29-hour vacancy at this point, but more openings expected.
- Parent Square will be a continued means of communication in the district. School Messenger will be eliminated eventually.
- Tom Bousquet provided an Equity Update. Lessons will be held in May. Focus on similarities and differences at the elementary level.
- STEM program will be re-instated for next year. Will include K-5. Program was cut two years ago due to budget.

Outdoor Classroom Update

Concrete will be poured, and fundraiser raised just over \$5,100. Archway and perimeter will be go up this spring as well. Progress continues to be made. Stonington Garden Club will assist with plants, as well as a sign up will be made for any parents that would like to help with this as well.

Yearbook

5th grade created the yearbook covers. Yearbooks will go home during the last week of school.

Field Day

Field Day will be held at DMS this year. Schedule and map have been created and classes will be outside participating in the games & relays etc. T-shirts will not be done this year. Kids will be encouraged to wear a certain color for that day, based on their grade.

Help Needed

PTO Treasurer is needed for the next school year. Please reach out to Tracy Brunelle or Katie Quinlan if you are interested.

6. Upcoming Chair Committee Updates

Liaisons

~Ashley Tewell~Teacher Appreciation Week went well, end of year planning is encouraged. Liaisons will coordinate end of year gifts with their classroom parents.

5th Grade Party Committee

Planning continues. Stations will be set up, gifts will be given, activities will be held, DJ, obstacle, bouncy house. Next meeting will be held virtually May 12th at 7 P.M. Students will remain in their cohorts during this celebration.

Book Fair

~Stephanie Gagnon & Heidi Redfern~ Spring book fair is being skipped. Will wait to hold next book fair once it can be held in person again.

Science & Tech. Day

~Jen Rothman~ Date has been scheduled for June 4th. Presenters will be virtual. Each class will have at least three presenters. Classroom teachers will help facilitate activities.

- Meeting was adjourned by PTO President, Katie Quinlan at 7:12 P.M.
- Minutes were transcribed by PTO Secretary, Jen Flynn.
- Next PTO meeting will be held in September. Have a wonderful summer!

SUMMERTIME