

November/December 2020



MESSAGE FROM THE PRINCIPAL – Dr. Mathew Nelson

November was another great month at Discovery Elementary! We are very thankful for the time that we have had together here and look forward to continuing in the hybrid learning model through January 28th when the model decision will be revisited. We will continue to keep you informed as we move forward together.

In November our Community C of focus was “Contribute” and we held our annual Thanksgiving Food Shelf community service project. Our families contributed to the Buffalo Food Shelf in a big way by bringing in \$1,701.38 in monetary donations, wow! Roger Brenny, from the Buffalo Food Shelf wanted us to extend his sincere appreciation for the generous support!

In December we will be focusing on “Celebrate” because we sure do have a lot to celebrate at DES and we are thankful for that. I believe it is important for us to stop and reflect on and celebrate the many outstanding people who help us provide a great experience for the students of Discovery Elementary. We appreciate all that is done by our teachers, educational assistants, secretaries, school nutrition employees, custodian staff, nursing department, social worker, and school psychologist to provide a high-quality learning experience for each individual student. The gifts of time and talent are always appreciated. We would also like to thank our dedicated parents, families, and community members for all that they do for the Discovery students.

As we move into the coldest winter months we will continue to remind the children to wear appropriate clothing for the weather. Playground rules and procedures for cold, wintry weather and information about emergency school closings can be found in the handbook and on the district website. District 877 elementary schools send students outside for recess **every day** that the temperature and/or wind chill are at or above 0 degrees. Students love playing outside and we just want to make sure they are dressed appropriate, and your assistance is greatly appreciated.

At Discovery Elementary school we all take great pride together in educating the whole-child to help our students learn, grow, and develop both academically and social/emotionally. One element that we are purposely embedding into our culture and everyday practice is that of a Growth Mindset. On the following page, we have included some information from Mindset Works on the concept of nurturing a Growth Mindset culture and some things that you can feel free to integrate into your home to help connect it for your children.

Although things are a little different at school right now, we are proud of the way all of our students have adjusted to the new protocols and how serious they have controlled what they can to keep us set up to be safe! We are looking forward to continuing with the hybrid learning model together, if you ever have any questions please feel free to contact me at any time.



“Together We’re Better”

How Parents Can Help Instill a Growth Mindset at Home



(From mindsetworks.com)

It's no secret that parenting can be hard at times. Having a growth mindset and believing in the power of a “not yet” attitude helps. Research shows that parents can have a powerful impact on their children’s mindsets. The language you use and the actions you take show your children what you expect. Giving process praise, talking about the brain, accepting mistakes as learning opportunities, and understanding the role of emotions in learning are all practices you can begin today. The way we praise our children can have a profound impact on their mindset. Research on praise and mindsets shows that when we praise children for being smart, it promotes a fixed mindset. It sends a message that their accomplishments are trait-based, and tied to something innate. In contrast, praising kids for working hard promotes a growth mindset. It sends a message that the child’s effort is what led them to success.

Say This	Avoid This
<p>“I can see you worked so hard on this!”</p> <p>Say this because it helps your children understand you value their effort</p>	<p>“You are so Smart!”</p> <p>Avoid saying this because it makes them think intelligence as a fixed quality.</p>
<p>“It seems like it’s time to try a new strategy.”</p> <p>Say this because it lets your children know that they control outcomes by making choices.</p>	<p>“It’s okay. Maybe your just not cut out for this!”</p> <p>Avoid saying this because it makes your children think they don’t have the capacity to improve.</p>
<p>“It looks like that was too easy for you. Let’s find you something more challenging so your brain can grow.”</p> <p>Say this because it teaches kids that learning should be challenging, and if tasks are too easy then your brain isn’t growing.</p>	<p>“That’s right!” You did that so quickly and easily; great job!”</p> <p>Avoid saying this because praising tasks completed without much effort paints effort in a negative light and encourages a fixed mindset.</p>
<p>“That was really hard. Your effort has paid off! Next time you’ll be even more ready for the challenge!”</p> <p>Say this because reminding children of how they were able to overcome challenges by putting forth a lot of effort cultivates a growth mindset.</p>	<p>“This was really hard. I’m so glad it’s over and you don’t have to do that again.”</p> <p>Avoid saying this because there will always be more challenges, and children should feel that they have the tools for what comes next.</p>

Talk About the Brain

The brain is far more malleable than we once thought. Teaching our kids that they actually have control over growing their brains through the actions they take is empowering! Tell your children that when they work hard, that’s the feeling of their neurons connecting. The dendrites are reaching out to other dendrites, trying to connect to make a stronger brain. What strengthens those connections is practice, asking questions, and actively participating in learning. When children learn that their brains physically change with effort, it leads to increased motivation and achievement.

Accept Mistakes as Learning Opportunities

One of the best ways you can model a growth mindset is to speak candidly about the mistakes you’ve made, and what you’ve learned from them. Speak positively about your mistakes and struggles, and this will show your children that taking risks and making mistakes are a natural part of the learning process. Explain to your children that trying hard things is what helps us grow, and you can’t be perfect when you try something hard!

A few updates and reminders from the health office:



Mask request: As we get used to this new requirement of wearing masks at school, please remind your student(s) to take them out of their backpack at home so they may be washed routinely. It is easy for young children to get in the habit of taking them out of their backpack in the morning, putting them back at the end of the school day and forgetting about them until the next morning. It is important that these masks get washed regularly. Your help with this is greatly appreciated!

Medical notes for phy ed exclusions etc.: When your student is seen in clinic and restrictions are recommended for school, please obtain a written note from the provider at the time of the visit (it should include specific activities, duration of exclusion etc.). Many clinics no longer fax to the schools, so it is important for you to provide that information in order for us to provide ongoing accommodations. Students may be allowed to sit out of physical education for one class without medical verification. In that case, they will also remain indoors for recess on that day.

Illness at school: We are coming to that time of year where we start hearing a lot about illness and influenza season in the media (in addition to COVID-19). As is typical for this time of year across the district, we are seeing a variety of illnesses; viral, strep throat and gastrointestinal illnesses among them. Please continue to monitor your student(s) health and incorporate strategies to keep them healthy. Some things you can do to help prevent the spread of illness are:

- For the safety of all students-do not send your student to school if they are ill.
- **Please review the COVID-19 Information** available on the BHM's main webpage. Information specific to COVID-like illness can be found by clicking next on the **COVID-19 Screening link**. This page also contains information regarding student illness at school and the impact on siblings.
- Continue to encourage your student to cover their cough by coughing into their elbow.
- Wear masks in school and as recommended while around non-household members.
- Continue to wash your student's masks routinely.
- **Handwashing is the single most effective way to prevent the spread of illness.** Hand sanitizer is okay to use when soap and water are not available.
- Assure your child is getting adequate sleep. Elementary aged children need 9-11 hours of *sleep* each night.
- Encourage a colorful diet, filled with fruits and vegetables and lean meats.
- Review and follow the school district's exclusion policy for illness.
- When calling in your student's absence, please note the specific symptoms your child is experiencing.



Dress for the Weather



It seems our Winter weather has arrived! With the colder weather upon us, students should have jackets, snow pants, mittens/gloves, hats and boots available for outdoor recess, phy-ed and periodic stretch breaks. The health office has very limited supplies of cold weather clothing, so plan ahead and make sure your child has their cool/cold weather clothing ready to go. **If you or someone you know is in need of cold weather clothing**, please contact Heidi Gallart, RN at 763-682-8514 or hgallart@bhmschools.org or ask any school staff member. We are all willing to help!

