



# Dwight Elementary School

*2012 National Blue Ribbon School*

**1600 Redding Road  
Fairfield, CT 06824**



**Mimi Maniscalco**  
Principal

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August 23, 2017

Dear Parents,

Summer has flown by but at the same time, I feel like it's time for a new school year. This summer was unique to me in that it began with caring for several of my family members. Directly after the last day of school, I flew to Florida to take care of my mother. While there, my son, who was playing baseball in Elmira, New York, injured his arm, which resulted in him having to undergo Tommy John surgery. As parents, the responsibility of researching, supporting and caring for our children is our primary goal and joy. What struck me this summer was the privilege it is to be able to provide for and take care of my family. We were able to secure arguably the best doctors and rehabilitation services that are available in the US. We are able to feed our children healthy high quality food, and we are able to give our children unconditional love and support to get them through the hard times. The power and responsibility of being a strong parent can be overwhelming but, is the most important work in which we engage. I want you to know that when your children walk into Dwight each day, providing them with a nurturing, engaging and relevant educational environment is our most important work.

This year, at Dwight and across the district, we will focus on improving and maximizing the impact of our Early Intervention Process for all students. At Dwight, we have been fine-tuning our process for the last two years and look forward to the improvement efforts that are being made at the district level. Grades 3-5 will also be rolling out a new Social Studies curriculum, which focuses on inquiry-based learning. These two goals complement all of the work we've done at Dwight on high level questioning, providing students with specific feedback, and developing flexible mindsets for learning. I would like to partner with you, the parent community, in continuing the work of developing flexible mindsets in ourselves and in our children. I invite you to join me in reading **Mindsets for Parents-Strategies to Encourage Growth Mindsets in Kids** by Mary Cay Ricci and Margaret Lee. The book is an engaging read that contains 8 chapters. We can set a date for book discussion in late fall or in January after our holiday festivities.

"Our little school on the hill" as some refer to Dwight, has undergone several upgrades that I am happy to share. Our basketball hoops have been installed on the black top – THANK YOU, PTA! Our bathroom piping has been replaced and repaired, entry resistant glass has been installed on our front and back doors and windows, and our wiring has been updated to provide more efficient internet service. Dwight is sparkling brightly due to these improvements and to the hard work of our custodial staff, Ms. Liz and Mr. Paul.

Dwight has several new staff members joining us this year. Mr. Conner will be our new PE teacher, Mr. Oddo will be our new CLC teacher, and Mrs. Popel will serve as one of our CLC para professionals. I am also happy to announce that Ms. Perko will rejoin the grade 3 team! All of these "new to Dwight" staff members bring with them a wealth of knowledge and expertise. We are thrilled to have them as members of our Dwight community.

Below please find important upcoming dates:

Wednesday, August 30, 2017	11:00 AM	New Families Tour – meet in front office
Wednesday, August 30, 2017	11:15 AM – 12:00 PM	All School Visit Followed by PTA Playground Play Date
Thursday, August 31, 2017	8:45 AM	First Day of School – Bring your camera
Thursday, August 31, 2017	9:00 AM	PTA Coffee Hour - APR
Wednesday, September 13, 2017	6:30 PM	Open House

One other date and time of which I'd like to make you aware is September 1 at 2:00 PM. We will be conducting the first of several lock down drills. I believe that it is good practice to make you aware of the lockdown drills so that you can discuss them with your child when he/she comes home from school. It is very important that we regularly practice both fire and lockdown drills. I'd like to thank you in advance for your cooperation and support in keeping our community safe and prepared.

Please regularly check your email, Infinite Campus and the PTA website for information and updates from both the PTA and from me.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mimi Maniscalco".

Mimi Maniscalco

*Teachers are sending their back to school communication to you on August 24. You will also be able to access your child's class placement through the IC portal on August 24 after 3:00 PM.*