

Mrs. Ackerman's Advisory Newsletter

January 2026

Instructional Focuses & Learning Targets:

Literature: This month, students created original magazines based on the person of interest they studied for their Biography Project. Students shared their work with peers in a Gallery Walk presentation. We also did a mini poetry study, revisiting and strengthening our annotation and analytical skills as it relates to figurative language and sensory details that connect to the poems' themes. Readers also began their new read-aloud unit: The Outsiders! This text is a fan-favorite and follows the social divide of the Greasers and Socs to confront harsh truths about loyalty, identity, and the divisions in their community.

Math: The instructional learning targets of the CSA middle school math curriculum focus on developing students' proficiency in key mathematical areas such as ratios, geometry, algebraic expressions, and statistics, while fostering critical thinking, problem-solving, and real-world application skills. The curriculum is designed to prepare students for high school math and beyond by encouraging a deep understanding of mathematical concepts.

- This month, students will be exploring concepts of equations and inequalities (Applied Math); graphing and writing linear equations (Intro to Integrated Math and Integrated I Math); and graphing quadratic functions (Integrated II Math).

Science: This month, students will be continuing Unit 4 - Rock Transformations. As student geologists, learners will explore a geological mystery: two rock samples—one from the Great Plains and one from the Rocky Mountains—look very different, yet contain a surprisingly similar mix of minerals. Did these rocks originally form together and later become separated, or did one form first and provide the materials for the other? To uncover the answer, students investigate how rocks form and change over time, and how various energy sources drive those transformations.

Social Studies: Students have just completed our Ancient India unit and will begin our exploration of Ancient China. In this unit students will examine how China's location and geography shaped its history and people. From the Himalayas to the Gobi desert, these early civilizations were shaped by the climate and natural geography. This unit will also include a study in civilizations that developed along the Huang He River, including the Shang Dynasty, which will set the stage for the discovery of these civilizations' innovations, societal structures, economies, linguistics and the arts. Students will also learn how early belief systems, ruling dynasties and innovations, like the Great Wall, impacted the development of this great society.





National Junior Honor Society

Members for the 2025- 26 school year have already been selected. To be considered for new membership to the CSAMS chapter of NJHS for the 2026 - 27 school year, current first and second year students must demonstrate outstanding scholarship by maintaining all A's in each content area on this school year's Term 1, 2 and 3 report cards. Invitations for next school year memberships are sent out in the summer.



Yearbooks

Middle School Yearbooks are on sale! Our yearbook is a 68-page color yearbook made by our Middle School Yearbook enhancement that captures events and memories from this school year. If you would like to order a yearbook, please visit this direct link: [Order Link!](#) If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Kowalczyk (kkowalczyk@csaschool.org).

Advisory Program:

In Term 2, we transition our focus to the Community, centered on the themes of Optimism and Getting Along with Others. Students will move from managing their own feelings to understanding the feelings of those around them. Specifically, we will target the skills necessary to use positive communication to interact effectively with peers. A major focus will be placed on the "work" of friendship: how to develop and maintain positive relationships through active listening and empathy. Finally, students will be equipped with support for conflict resolution, learning how to navigate disagreements with a helpful, optimistic mindset that prioritizes solution-seeking over blame.

Third Year Project

We are excited to kick off the Third Year Project for the 2025-2026 school year! This comprehensive project is designed to be the pinnacle of your student's middle school experience, allowing them to demonstrate their academic competency, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills.

Project Components: Students will dive deep into a topic of their choice to produce:

- **Extended Essay:** A well-developed research paper (maximum 1,500 words) written in APA format. It requires a minimum of six sources, four of which must be scholarly.
- **Presentation:** A professional 4.5 to 5-minute speech accompanied by a Google Slideshow to demonstrate the knowledge gained from their research.

Important Upcoming Dates: Please mark your calendars for these key milestones to help keep your student on track:

- Wednesday, Dec 17: Project Proposal Due
- Monday, Jan 12: Sources and Paper Outline Due
- Monday, Jan 26: 1st Draft of Extended Essay Due
- Monday, Feb 16: Final Draft of Extended Essay Due
- Monday, Mar 2: Presentation Speeches Due
- Monday, Mar 9: Google Slideshow Due
- April 13 – 16: Presentation Nights

We look forward to seeing the incredible work our students will produce!





PowerSchool

POWERSCHOOL

Remember you can check your child's progress on PowerSchool at any time at <https://csadistrict.powerschool.com/public/>.

MRS.

ACKERMAN'S ADVISORY

Your child benefits most when we work together as a team. If you are not receiving regular emails from me, please let me know so I can ensure you stay informed.

Your encouragement, support, and involvement motivate your child to reach their potential, while we strive to guide and provide the tools they need to succeed. By partnering, we can help your child thrive. Thank you for your dedication to your child's education. I feel honored to be part of their learning journey.

In partnership with you,

Lauren Ackerman
LAckerman@csaschool.org

MONTH-AT-A-GLANCE

Friday, January 9th
CSA/CSAMS Spirit Wear

Monday, January 19th
Day of Service

Friday, January 23rd
CSA/CSAMS Spirit Wear

Friday, January 30th
Yellow Spirit Day for
National School of Choice Day

