

MR. ELLIS' CHAMPS



January 2026

CSA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

• Instructional Focus/Learning Targets

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 algebraic expressions (Foundations Math), solving equations (Applied Math); graphing and writing and graphing linear equations (Intro to Integrated Math and Integrated I Math); and graphing quadratic functions (Integrated II Math).

Science:

- This month in science, students will begin by finalizing scientific arguments for how an athlete can increase cellular respiration to improve performance. Then they will take on the role of food engineer interns, applying their knowledge of metabolism to design a healthy food bar called the *FuturaBar*. Students will investigate how protein, carbohydrates, and glycemic index affect the body's energy, growth, and repair, and use this science to meet the needs of a specific target population. Using a digital design tool, students will collect and analyze data, test and revise recipes, and balance real-world constraints like taste and cost. The unit culminates in a final proposal where students justify their design choices, simulating an authentic engineering internship experience following the Metabolism unit.

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Literature:

- This month, students created original magazines based on This month, students will kick off their learning with an engaging mini poetry unit focused on deep exploration and close reading. Through activities such as poem replication, text comparisons, and thoughtful analysis of themes, students will strengthen both their interpretive and creative skills. Following the Day of Service, Literature students will transition into an exciting study of Greek mythology. As they explore a variety of classic myths, students will create individual scrapbook pages that reflect their understanding and creativity. This unit will culminate in a fully assembled Greek mythology scrapbook, showcasing their learning and imaginative work throughout the study. 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. Then, students engaged in an Independent Research Unit which allowed them to study an influential historical figure, impactful innovation, the conservation of endangered species, or a cultural tradition around the world.

Social Studies

- Students are exploring the origins of the United States government and taking a deep dive into the Constitution. We are examining why it was created, the ideas that influenced it, and how it continues to guide our government today. Students will analyze key principles such as separation of powers, checks and balances, and individual rights. Through discussions and activities, they are learning how these principles shape laws and leadership in our country. This work helps students better understand their role as citizens and the importance of an informed and active public.



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Advisory:

- 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.

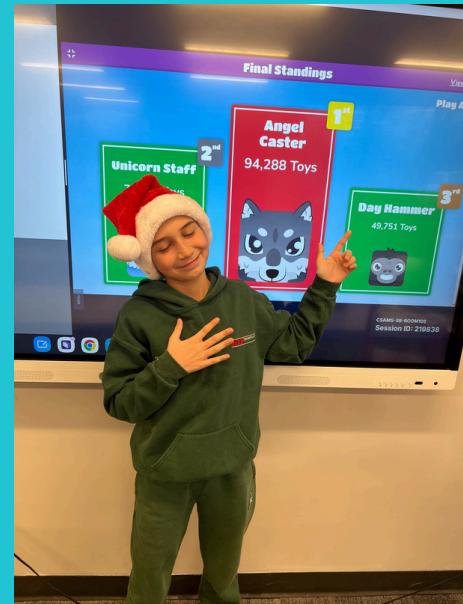
POWERSCHOOL and CSA District Annual Student Forms

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



All CSA District annual student forms can be accessed and completed electronically through your student's PowerSchool account. Under the PowerSchool Parent Portal, you can update emergency contact information and complete all annual forms. If you need help or support with accessing your PowerSchool account, please let me know.

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Beluga Ball Class Project & Gaming Basket Donations

- Our class is excited to contribute to this year's Beluga Ball with two special projects. First, we will be assembling a gaming-themed basket designed to be broad and accessible for all types of gamers. Donations may include items such as a universal gaming headset, keyboard, or gift cards to places like Walmart, Target, GameStop, or Amazon. Gift cards are especially helpful, as they tend to perform very well in the auction and allow winners to choose items that fit their specific gaming systems. Students will also be asked to share ideas about what they enjoy or use in their own gaming to help guide the basket contents.
- In addition, we are exploring a large class project involving the transformation of a donated whiskey barrel into a functional cabinet. Students may have opportunities to participate in creative aspects of the project, such as signing the underside of the barrel before it is sealed and helping decide how it is finished. More details will be shared as plans come together, and we are grateful for the donated goods that make these projects possible.



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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**

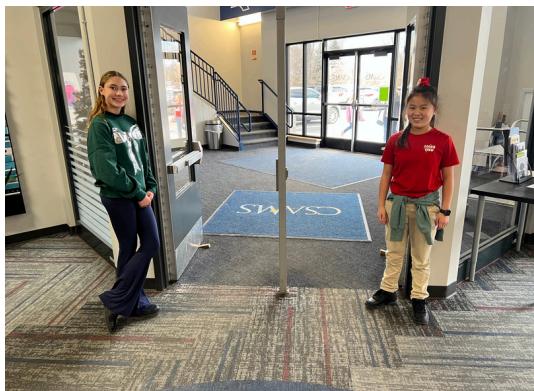
We look forward to seeing the incredible work our students will produce!

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).

National Junior Honor 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 at the end of the school year.



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Thank you!

- Your child receives the best education when you and I work as a team. It is a parent's enthusiasm, support, and involvement that inspires children to do their best, and a teacher's ability to teach what they need to learn. Together, we can achieve wonderful things that will allow your child to excel. Thank you for your commitment to your child's education and I feel privileged to be a part of your child's educational journey.

Upcoming Calendar of Events

- **Friday, January 9th** CSA/CSAMS Spirit Wear
- **Monday, January 12th** CSAMS Girls Basketball Try-Outs at CSPA (5:00 - 6:30 pm)
- **Monday, January 19th** Day of Service
- **Friday, January 23rd** CSA/CSAMS Spirit Wear
- **Friday, January 30th** Yellow Day for National School Choice

