

# HARBOUR herald

*-A Ship is Safe in Harbour-*

From Mr. Hyska and Ms. Denniston

January, 6th, 2026



## Highlights

December seems like it happened so long ago, but there were many memorable moments.

- Reflecting on our first term of learning and sorting and creating our quality work portfolios.
- The second classroom party (Christmas) was a huge success as we rocked the day away, ate some yummy food, created ornaments, and played reindeer games.
- Wrapped up our Geometry math units, character studies in Reading workshop, and narrative writing using the writing process in Writer's Workshop.
- Brainstormed, reflected, and set goals for Term 2 in our Winter Wishes hallway project.
- December was also a month of SUPER growth in our learning and our relationships as we focused on responsibility and kindness traits!
- Learned about Christmas and Hanukkah, reading many books about both!

## Important Dates

1/5 - School Resumes  
1/9 - Pep Rally and CSA spirit wear day  
1/13 - Parent Council Meeting @CSAMS - 6 pm  
1/16 - Rollerama  
1/19- Triple S Boosters Parent's Night Out!  
1/19- MLK Jr. Day- School is IN session!  
1/22 - Family Fitness Night  
1/30 - Parent Council Family Movie Night

## **Navigator News - Uniform Reminder**

As an integral piece of our school's philosophy, CSA has crafted a uniform policy that aims to promote a safe learning environment. As a school-wide initiative, we are sending out some uniform reminders. Please take some time to review the reminders below and make any adjustments needed. Please see the CSA Family Handbook for the full description of the uniform policy. Attached to the newsletter is an excerpt copied directly from the handbook for your convenience. If you have questions, we are happy to provide guidance, or you can always follow up with Leadership directly. Thank you for helping to maintain a core piece of CSA's mission.

**Shirts:** Solid colors in white, light blue, or red. Undershirts must be solid white.

**Socks/Tights:** Must be solid white or solid navy blue. **Shoes:** Dress shoes are allowed in the following solid colors: brown, navy, or black.

**Tennis shoes** are allowed in the following solid colors: black, white, navy, and grey. They do not have to be dress shoes.

**Sweaters/Cardigans/Vests:** Must be solid navy blue.

**Hair accessories:** Must be red, light blue, navy blue, white, brown, or black.

**Leggings** are not permitted except as extra layers for recess or carpool. Pants must be navy blue.

## Items From Home

With the holidays over break, there is often much excitement over some new gifts and treasures. We tend to see an influx of new toys and trinkets coming to school. While we so appreciate that excitement and sense of wonderment in our students, the reality is that there are a lot of wandering thoughts towards treasures in lockers. There's also an increase in hallway meetings to look at/share/trade items. We would appreciate help in leaving these treasures at home. We have noticed an uptick in stuffed animals and other items have become distractions. There should also be absolutely no electronics coming to school at all, especially devices which can take pictures or record. Sometimes things get left in backpacks from weekend sleepovers or play dates, so an extra check for toys in the morning might be a good idea. :-) Students participating in any programs after school should keep any necessary items in backpacks for use only at those programs and should not appear during the day. If necessary, we will collect the item and return to you at the end of the day. Thank you so much for your support!!! :-)



## What We Are Working On

Here are some highlights in the skills our learners are working on this month in our academic workshops:

**Reading:** Readers will begin to explore nonfiction texts, learning about nonfiction text features and how they help readers learn new information (table of contents, glossary, index, etc.), ask and answer questions about an informational text before, during, and after reading it, and being able to retell learned information with a partner and/or group.

**Writing:** In connection with learning about nonfiction text features as readers, students will explore non-fiction writing as well. We will be discussing the author's purpose of a text (in this case, to inform others) and help our students to understand that they can also write to inform others about topics they already know much about. This will then lead us to basic steps in researching new information. From there, students will be able to apply their knowledge of nonfiction text features and craft animal reports based on shared research. We will also continue to review the components of the writing process, with a specific focus on editing, appropriate to each student's writing experience.

**Math:** Mathematicians will learn about missing addends in addition sentences, continue to focus on math fact fluency, learning about the relationship between addition and subtraction, and working on addition and subtraction within 1,000 (as it applies to our students and their independent math understanding- for some this may focus on two-digit problems and for others, it may extend into three-digits or beyond).

## Last Classroom Party - Valentine's

We just wanted to give a heads up that our final of three classroom parties will happen in early February. We will send out a Sign-Up Genius later this month with more details. This will be your last chance to volunteer at a party and see all the fun of a Harbour celebration! Save the date for **Friday, February 6th**.

## Thank You!

If we weren't able to catch you in the moment or see you soon after, we wanted to reach out and say THANK YOU for all the outpouring of Christmas cheer, kind messages, baked goods, and gifts this holiday season. We were spoiled with your generosity and love! We appreciate our strong relationship with our classroom families and these moments just reinforce the special bond we have in the Harbour Family.... THANK YOU!



Coming soon in your student's Tuesday folder, you will see the January Learning Extension Choice Board. Remember that this is an optional activity board, but is designed to facilitate and support learning at home by making fun and real-world connections to what we'll be working on in the classroom. Each box can be completed more than once, adjusted to fit your learner's needs and the level they are personally working at as necessary. Students are welcome to send in any completed work items to share and the checked off choice board can be returned at the end of the month. Have fun!

## Outdoor Attire Reminder

Oh this lovely Michigan weather! We've got a back-and-forth with our temperatures lately and phew does that cold air sneak up! Please be sure to check weather forecasts and make sure your learner is sent with appropriate outdoor gear each day.

Physical movement is critical to learning and we take advantage of recess outside as often as possible. We closely monitor the temperature and wind chill to make decisions for the health and safety for all students but this is a day-to-day and sometimes even minute-to-minute basis with the ever-changing Michigan weather we all know and love. Except in cases of extreme temperatures or pouring rain, we are outside for recess and students should be prepared with the right attire.

Extra hats and gloves can remain in lockers just in case the day's weather calls for it. As boots start to become more usual morning dress, please be sure to send a change of shoes to wear during the school day. Warmer dress applies for carpool times where we are on the curb at pick-up as well. For girls wearing skirts, for example, on days when maybe snow pants aren't necessary but tights just don't cut it, feel free to send a pair of cover-up pants (whether leggings or sweatpants or something) so those poor bare legs are warm. Leggings are **NOT** part of uniform or dress code for the school day, but are permissible for outside. Likewise, boots are not within uniform guidelines and students should have an appropriate pair of shoes each day. Email with any questions!

**Label, label, LABEL** all outdoor gear as well. We get lots of gloves and hats that are very similar and get mixed up. We also HIGHLY recommend that students practice putting on their gear, especially as December approaches and snow gear becomes a regular necessity. Practice building speed and independence so precious recess minutes aren't lost to dressing for the weather. Thank you for your support!

## Character Corner

As we transition back from Christmas Break, it's natural for students to need time to reestablish their routines, reacquaint themselves with classroom procedures, and step back into their roles as learners. This adjustment can feel like a challenge for some, but our goal is to harness their work ethic to quickly regain momentum and continue building on the progress we made before the break.

Last month, we focused on developing a strong work ethic and explored how it connects to producing high-quality work. We also introduced the idea of a growth mindset—a concept rooted in Carol Dweck's research that examines the difference between growth and fixed mindsets. A growth mindset is the belief that learning and growth are always possible, no matter where you are in your journey. It's the mindset that says, "I can improve if I try." In contrast, a fixed mindset assumes that abilities are static, leading to complacency or doubt about the potential for growth. Dweck's research highlights the transformative power of adopting a growth mindset.

By encouraging students to trust in their capacity to learn and grow, regardless of their starting point, we can help them achieve greater success. That's the energy we want to bring into the New Year—celebrating the accomplishments of Term 1 while fostering a mindset that fuels motivation and perseverance for the challenges ahead.

In the classroom, a growth mindset shows up in students who embrace challenges, approach mistakes with optimism, and experiment with different strategies to solve problems. Phrases like "I'll give it a try" or "I can do this" are clear indicators of a budding growth mindset. Importantly, this mindset is not limited to any one group of learners—it's about how each individual approaches the next challenge.

As we move forward, we'll continue to reinforce the foundations we've been building since the start of the year. This includes setting positive, action-oriented goals like "I will...", using "I can" statements to articulate daily learning objectives, emphasizing optimism and work ethic through discussions and modeling, and celebrating growth mindsets through carefully selected read-alouds like *Rosie Revere*. We're also creating opportunities for students to take on challenges in areas like math and writing within a supportive environment.

Looking ahead, we'll integrate growth mindset principles into activities like the upcoming NWEA testing, reflecting on how far we've come since September, setting new goals for Term 2, and engaging in a culminating project. We'll also explore how growth mindset applies beyond academics, including relationships and social skills. Keep an eye out for more updates on our journey with growth mindset in future newsletters!

