

# McCloskey Message

Happy February! I was born 5 weeks early and was usually the shortest person in my class, and in my family. Somewhere along the line someone told me that Shorter is Cuter, and it has been one of my mottos. I've never minded being short, and I've always felt a kinship with February for it being the shortest month. Shorter is cuter, (sorry tall people, you get to be tall, that's reward in itself!) and February is definitely cute...Valentines day, snow, pink cheeks, hearts, sweetness!

**Science:** In our next unit, "Phase Change," students will investigate the mystery of the methane lake on Titan. The apparent disappearance of the lake serves as the anchor phenomenon for the unit, and the students' assignment is to determine what happened to the lake. Motivated to understand phase change more deeply, students gather evidence from the *Phase Change Simulation*, from several articles, and from physical investigations of phase change. They learn that the molecules of a substance move differently when that substance is in different phases. They also learn how the kinetic energy of molecules and the attraction between the molecules affects the way in which the molecules move. Students use this newfound understanding of molecules, kinetic energy, and attraction, as well as evidence about the conditions on Titan, to explain what they think happened to Titan's mysterious lake.

**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 equations (Foundations Math), ratios and rates (Applied Math); graphing and writing systems of linear equations (Intro to Integrated Math and Integrated I Math); and solving quadratic equations (Integrated II Math).

## Literature:

This month, students are putting the finishing touches on their Greek Mythology scrapbook projects, making meaningful connections between the myths, their morals and themes, and their influence on modern literature. After completing the project, we'll begin our second read-aloud of the year, *The Outsiders*. As we journey through the novel, students will explore Robert Frost's poem "Nothing Gold Can Stay," analyze its connection to the text, and then replicate the poem by adopting Frost's tone while adding their own creative spin. Throughout the beginning of the novel, students will dive deeply into the characters, themes, and moments that shape the story.

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**Social Studies:** In February, students will get a chance to dive into Ancient Hebrews, the Origins of Judaism and finally, the much awaited Ancient Greece! Students have been very excited for this unit and we are excited to finally get to dig deeper into it with them. Students will use these historical examples to continue their studies on how civilizations rose to power, lost power, and fell. We will look further into factors that helped civilizations develop, the technologies they used, the geography of the areas, and the reasons these great civilizations eventually met their downfall. By the end, students will be able to make connections to previous civilizations, demonstrate their understanding of the differences between these civilizations and emphasize the lasting marks they left on the world.



## Upcoming Calendar of Events:

Wednesday, February 11th  
Thursday, February 12th  
Friday, February 13th  
Monday, February 16th  
Friday, February 27th

Comfy Clothes Spirit Day  
Activity Night, 4:00pm-5:30pm  
No School - Mid Winter Break  
No School - Mid Winter Break  
CSA/CSAMS Spirit Wear

### Advisory Program:

We have two more goals to meet for the month of February in Advisory. One, we will be reflecting on our Day of Service in great depth and that will take some time and some searching of the heart. Two, we will be exploring and celebrating the Olympics, especially the underdogs-looking into what it's like to represent your country at the Olympics even if you have no real shot at a medal. Besides that, we will be closely following the personal journey of my very own nephew, Jake Vedder, in his 2nd time at the Olympics at just 27 years old. Help me cheer him on in the Snowboard Cross events as he represents not only the US, but Livingston County, Pinckney, Mount Brighton, and my family in Italy! Let's Go!



### 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).

### Beluga Ball Basket

Collect any and all UofM or Michigan State clothes, decorations, collectables, sports equipment, pictures, memorabilia, etc. for our Beluga Ball basket! Let's make it great!

## 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/>.



### 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:

- 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!



## Activity Night:

Our upcoming Winter Glow Activity Night is going to light up the winter season with neon colors, glow sticks, music, and tons of high-energy fun. It will be held after school on February 12th from 4:00-5:30. The cost of admission is \$5 if pre-paid, or \$7 the day of the event, and covers pizza, water, and snacks! Parents MUST enter the building to sign out their student(s) afterward. We're so excited to create a bright, memorable night for our students—and we'd love your help to make it shine! Please consider using the donation link below to contribute glow sticks, neon décor, or other event supplies. Every donation helps us bring the glow and make this night a huge success. Thank you for your support—we can't wait to see everyone glowing! ❤️❤️⭐️

## Battle of the Books:

Get ready for an exciting showdown of reading knowledge! In March, we will host our first annual "Battle of the Books": a fast-paced trivia competition where students go head-to-head by answering questions based on novels from a pre-selected reading list. Participants will put their comprehension, teamwork, and recall skills to the test as they compete for bragging rights and schoolwide recognition. It's a fun and engaging way to celebrate reading, encourage thoughtful discussion of literature, and spark a little friendly competition. Let the reading—and the battle—begin!

**Career Day:** We are excited to announce our school's third annual Career Day, aimed at providing valuable insights into various professions and helping guide our middle school students toward their future careers. We believe that exposing our students to various career paths early on can positively impact their academic choices and future endeavors.

Your participation at this event is crucial in making it a success!

**We are seeking Presenters** to share their career journeys, educational experiences, and valuable advice with our students. Our goal is to inspire and inform students about the myriad of career possibilities that await them!

If you, a family member, friend, or community contact are interested in presenting during our Career Day, we extend a warm invitation to join us: But the date is TBD. It needed to be rescheduled due to all the snow days and other events going on. But please consider if you could help shape the future aspirations of our middle school students by sharing what you do!

