

# Ms. Kowalczyk's Advisory Newsletter February 2026

Happy February!

We are now halfway through term two, and half way through the school year! The school year has gone by fast! Our advisory has a lot of fun activities to look forward to this month, including a field trip, some spirit days, Activity Night, a four day weekend, and continuing to prepare for our Battle of the Books trivia competition!

## Classroom Updates

**Literature:** In February, first year writers will embark on an independent research project, exploring choice topics such as unsung heroes in history, environmental conservation and endangered species, innovations that changed the world, or cultural traditions around the world. Students will learn foundational skills for collecting, analyzing, organizing, and using evidence to support their thesis statement, as well as use an academic vocabulary to present their findings and viewpoints. At the end of the month, we will begin our second read-aloud unit: Out of My Mind by Sharon Draper: a heartwarming story about a gifted girl named Melody Brooks, a brilliant 11-year-old with cerebral palsy, who has a photographic memory but can't speak, walk, or write, leading others to underestimate her until she gets a device to communicate, revealing her genius and facing challenges of inclusion and acceptance.

**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), and systems of linear equations (Intro to Integrated Math).

**Social Studies:** In February, students will be building a deeper understanding of citizenship and decision-making in our government. We'll explore the rights and responsibilities of citizens and how individuals and groups influence decisions at local, state, and national levels. Students will also study voting and elections, learning how leaders are chosen and why participation is essential to a healthy democracy. To wrap up the month, we'll examine foreign affairs and treaties, helping students understand how the United States works with other countries and makes decisions on the global stage.

**Science:** This month in science, students will begin a new unit on Traits and Reproduction. Students will take on the role of genetic researchers investigating why closely related spiders can have different traits, focusing on the flexibility of spider silk used for medical purposes. Students will explore how genes provide instructions for making proteins and how differences in protein structure lead to differences in observable traits. Through hands-on models, readings, and an interactive digital simulation, students will analyze how different gene combinations affect the proteins made inside cells and, in turn, an organism's traits. Throughout the month, students will connect their learning about spider genetics to real-world human examples, building a clear understanding of how genes, proteins, and traits work together to create variation in living organisms.



Happy birthday to our February birthdays!

- ★ Von
- ★ Olivia
- ★ Amelia
- ★ Trevor
- ★ Carly



## Studying Snapshots

Throughout the school year in each class, students are putting together work pieces that will go towards their end of the year portfolio. Recently, some of our students were working on a term two contribution in math by completing the "Design-a-Park" project that involved applying the concepts of fractions, decimals, and percents towards planning on their own park.

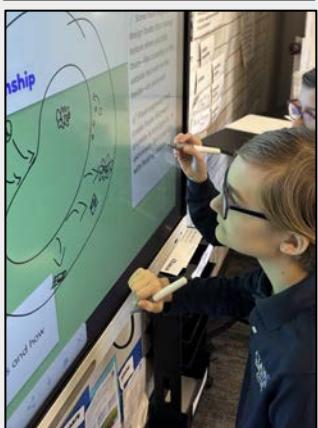
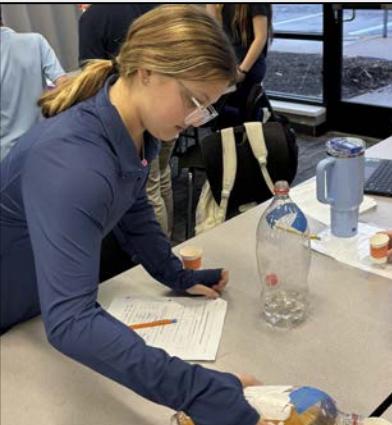
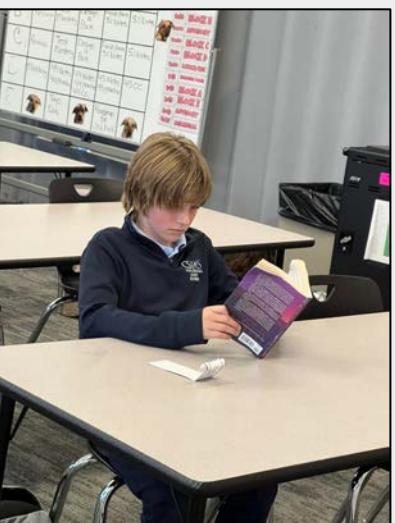
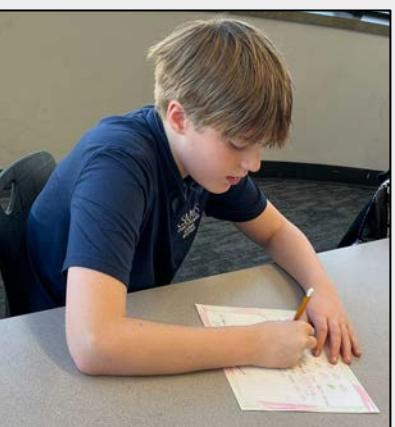
# Information Station

## 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.

## Yearbook Orders

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!](#)



## 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!

## PowerSchool

Remember you can check your child's progress on **PowerSchool** at any time at <https://csadistrict.powerschool.com/public/>. If you need support/help with accessing your PowerSchool account, please let me know or you can email Mrs. Marcum at [mmarcum@csaschool.org](mailto:mmarcum@csaschool.org).

# A Peek Into Our Advisory Life

## We're Better Together

In January, we started an advisory activity that will ultimately take several weeks to complete that is focused on building community and connection. To start it off, we did some team building and community activities. One of the activities we did that seemed to be quite popular was the cup stacking challenge. Students worked in groups and using only string tied to a rubber band, they had to make a mini pyramid with six cups. For the first attempt, students were not allowed to talk to each other and had to figure out how to accomplish the task without words. Each group timed themselves to see how long it took to make the pyramid, and then they attempted the task again but were able to talk to each other. Afterwards we discussed strategies that worked well and what groups noticed as the biggest difference between not talking and talking, and how communication impacted their experience.



## Notable Quotables

We spent some time in advisory going through a selection of quotes from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Students read through the list and shared out what quote was their favorite and why, and then students worked in small groups to explain what their assigned quote meant in their own words and how it connected to all of us at CSAMS.



## Getting Along With Others

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.



## Student Celebration

For our Student Celebration for

February, we recognize and celebrate the members of Kowalczyk Advisory who have been a part of our middle school band and choir! These individuals have dedicated their time and shared their talents through participating in our music program.



## Classmate Bingo

When we came back from Christmas break, we spent our first advisory back together playing "Classmate Bingo". This was a hands-on way for students to interact with each other, talk, learn something possibly new about one another, and to have a refresher on our expectations and procedures.



## Student's Choice

A favorite among many.....Blooket! Students played a Blooket where they had to select the name of the color that was shown on their screen.



## Good Boy Photo of the Month



## Beluga Ball Basket

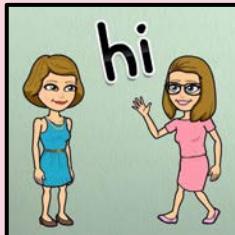
Our advisory is preparing for this year's Beluga Ball on Saturday, March 21, 2026. We are collecting items for our **Pink Basket**. We are asking each advisory family for a donation of either cash (to purchase items) or a household item(s) that comes in pink for our advisory basket. Cash can be brought in to me in an envelope labeled "Beluga Ball Donation" and donations can be brought to me as well. We ask that all donations please be brought in by February 10th.



## Calendar Updates

- Wednesday, February 4th
- Wednesday, February 11th
- Thursday, February 12th
- Friday, February 13th
- Monday, February 16th
- Friday, February 27th

- Snowtubing Field Trip
- Comfy Clothes Spirit Wear Day
- Activity Night 4:00pm-5:30pm
- NO SCHOOL - Midwinter Break
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- CSA/CSAMS Spirit Wear



## Parent Support

As your child continues on their school year journey, we encourage you to regularly engage with them at home. Establishing consistent routines—such as practicing math with flashcards, reading together, or setting aside dedicated homework time—can significantly contribute to your child's success this year.



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.

In partnership with you,  
*Katie Kowalczyk*

