

# MR. LAPEEN

## Advisory Newsletter



## FEBRUARY 2025

Welcome to February! Yesterday students participated in our annual Day of Service to commemorate the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and today students embarked on a snow tubing adventure at Hawk Island! It's been a busy, fulfilling and fun few days at CSAMS. This is Mrs. Barnaby communicating this month's advisory newsletter with you, and I would like to take a moment to welcome Mr. Logan LaPeeen on as our newest CSAMS teacher. Mr. LaPeeen comes to us from University of Michigan Flint, and he is a social studies enthusiast! I am excited for you to have a chance to meet him over the next few weeks and during spring Comprehensive Student Reviews. While Mr. LaPeeen is adjusting to his responsibilities as a CSAMS teacher, Mr. Kanous will be present in your students' classes on a regular basis.

### CSA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM

- 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).
- 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.
- 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.

## CSA EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM CONTINUED:

- 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.
- 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

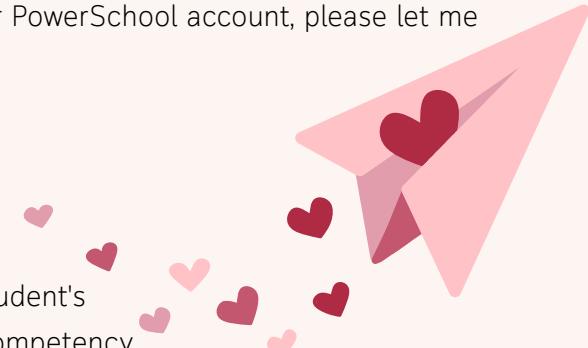
Remember you can check your child's progress on PowerSchool at any time at:

<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.

## THIRD YEAR PROJECTS

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

# ACTIVITY NIGHT FEBRUARY 12

**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 prepaid, 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! 

## UPCOMING CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Wednesday, February 11th Comfy Clothes Spirit Day
- Thursday, February 12th Activity Night, 4:00pm-5:30pm
- Friday, February 13th No School - Mid-winter Break
- Monday, February 16th No School - Mid-winter Break
- Friday, February 27th CSA/CSAMS Spirit Wear



### 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.

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.

In partnership with you,  
Dina M Barnaby

# BATTLE OF THE BOOKS

### 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!

## YEARBOOK

### 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).