

COUGAR NEWS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CMS FAMILIES

• JANUARY 2020 •



LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Happy New Year CMS Families!

As we embark on these next two months of the school year, our students will be focusing on setting targets for themselves and understanding how to work toward and measure their progress in attaining their goals. During afternoon TA students will learn about the purpose for setting a goal, which we will call a target, and learn a format for designing them. The format we will be teaching our students is called WOOP.

WOOP stands for **Wish, Outcome, Obstacle, Plan**. In this process, students begin by identifying a wish - either personal or academic that they hope for. Next they consider the best outcome as a result of accomplishing their wish. What will it feel like to make it happen? Next they identify any potential obstacles in their way of achieving their desired wish. Then make a plan that identifies the obstacle and how to overcome it in order to achieve the wish or desired outcome.

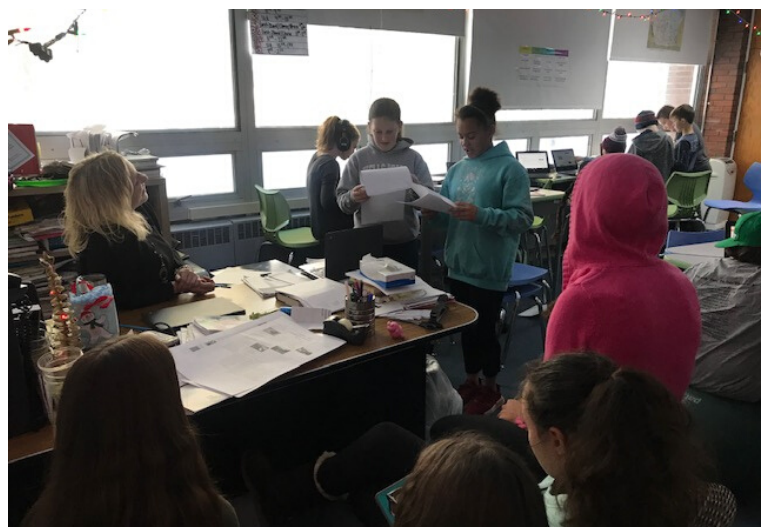
DATES TO KNOW

JANUARY

- 2 School Resumes
- 10 Ski & Board: Week 3
- 13-14 SBAC Interim Assessments (*Math & LA only*)
- 17 Ski & Board: Week 4
- 20 School Holiday: MLK Day
- 23 8th Grade Open House • 6:30p • PAC @ CHS
- 24 Ski & Board: Week 5
- 31 Ski & Board: Make-up Date (*only if needed*)

FEBRUARY & MARCH

- 4 PTA Meeting • 6:00p • CMS Library
- 5 Early Release Day • Noon Dismissal
- 24-3/2 Winter Recess from 2/24 - 3/2
- 3/3 Student Conferences 10:30a - 6:30p



Continued...

Finally, students will reflect on their plan and outcome. Students will set at least one goal in January and monitor their progress towards achieving it over the coming months. We will be encouraging students to set attainable personal goals, either academically or non-academically related, which can be achieved prior to the end of the school year. We will provide support and guidance to students as they work on setting and measuring their achievement toward their personal targets.

This teaching and learning about goal setting directly relates to the work we have been doing this year with reflection of learning with our students. These strategies help our students to become engaged and active participants in the learning process. It puts them at the center of their education. We believe these tools will support our students in high school and beyond as lifelong learners in whatever path they choose.

Respectfully,

Michele



INFORMATION FOR 8TH GRADE FAMILIES

Beginning this month, CMS will keep 8th grade families informed of any upcoming high school transition activities that we have planned. This is an exciting time for our students as they begin to wrap up their time in middle school and think ahead to high school next year.

In January our school counselors, Kara Pawlusiak and Cori Giroux-Williams, will be meeting with all 8th grade students by team to introduce them to the Program of Studies available at Colchester High School. They do this every year with our students as it helps to begin to familiarize them with the differences between a high school and middle school schedule and some potential options for choice in classes.

*The 8th grade dance will be held on Friday, June 5, 2020. Please contact the school or PTA if you are interested in serving on the parent dance committee. This committee is parent organized and run and makes all the difference for a successful 8th Grade Send Off Dance! You can contact Michele Cote at michele.cote@colchestersd.org or Karen Fetter at colchestermiddleschoolpta@gmail.com for information about how to join.

*CHS 8th Grade Open House - January 23rd 6:30 CHS Performing Arts Center

FOR YOUR INFORMATION



INTERESTED IN IMPROV?

Do you love to make people laugh? Are you looking for a way to showcase your acting talents and skills?

Check out the CMS Improv Club!

Improviseational theater, often called improv, is a comedic form of theater that is performed unplanned and unscripted. Come join us on **Tuesdays after school from 2:15-3:00**. Our first club meeting will be on **Tuesday, January 14th**. Make sure to stop by Ms. Farfaglia's classroom, room 230 or the front desk to get a

permission slip. The permission slip must be completed and returned by Friday, January 10th in order to attend the first meeting on the 14th.

CMS PRIDE: HOME OF THE COUGARS!



When you drive by Colchester Middle School you will notice our new school signs. On the front of our school is a sign with "Colchester Middle School" and a small cougar insignia. And on the side of the building on the entrance to the gym is a sign which says "Welcome to the Home of the Cougars" with a large cougar emblem!



TAKING IN THE SOUNDS OF THE SEASON

A huge shout out to our students and band and chorus teachers for their winter performances! They were both wonderful concerts to attend. I hope you had the chance to be there. If not, there will be another opportunity later in the spring.



WHAT'S GOING ON AT CMS

STUDENT AMBASSADORS

Our student ambassadors are participating in a training program with our school counselors which is preparing them to welcome and support prospective and new students. When a prospective student wants to visit CMS, these students are on call to be their guide for the day. Their job is to greet the student upon arrival, help the student feel welcome, and show them around so they get an idea of what being a student at CMS is like. Often this happens by way of attending the ambassador's classes together.

The ambassadors describe their role as welcoming, helpful, and trusting for the visitor and new student. The ambassadors will also be supporting in the transition of Step Up Day for 5th grade students and Smart Start at the beginning of the school year.



PROJECT LINUS

As part of their TA work with empathy, Team Sequoia students worked with the nonprofit, Project Linus, to make blankets for the UVM Children's Hospital on Monday, December 16. Many of the supplies were donated by the organization, but to offset costs, families could make a monetary donation. Before break, students worked in pairs to make close to 30 blankets to donate. While the donations are something to celebrate, the real cause for celebration is in the empathy students expressed for others as they reflected on the project.



One student shared how he could only focus on the fact the blanket would be going to a child in need, another shared about how the project raised awareness for her about the needs of others and because a few students were discussing a child they know in our school system who is struggling, a blanket will go to that child too! You may find more information about Project Linus on their website <https://www.projectlinus.org/>.

WHAT'S GOING ON AT CMS

EMPATHY & KINDESS DAY ON DENALI

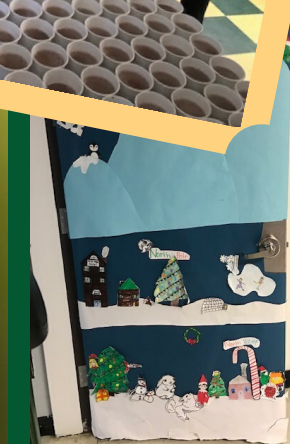
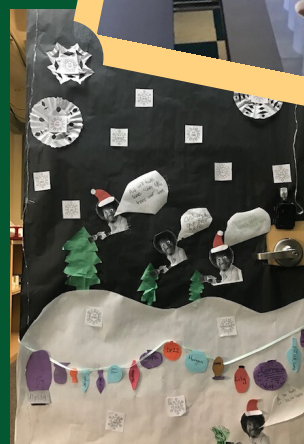


Before break, Team Denali spent a day focusing on empathy and kindness with their students. During morning TA, they had a discussion in a restorative circle and then spent time viewing the movie *Wonder*. Our restorative practice consultant worked with the teachers beforehand to develop a process that students could work through after the movie to discuss what they saw, heard and learned from the movie about empathy and kindness.

Students displayed an awareness around not making judgments of others based on outward appearances. They also talked about the importance of getting to know other people and understanding that we each have a story which has helped to shape and define us. Some students shared personal experiences with judgement, empathy and kindness. The conversations were powerful. If you have a student on Team Denali ask them about their experience!

FESTIVE ACTS OF KINDNESS

On December 4th, as part of our Kindness Awareness Day, students made clothespin wreaths for people and organizations in our community who support us. In addition to wreaths, students demonstrated an awareness of kindness by participating in door decorating.



The doors were to be decorated in a winter theme and had to incorporate snowflakes into the design. Doors were judged according to those criteria and a winning door for one TA on each team was recognized. The winning TA's were: Mrs. Kneeland (6th grade), Mrs. Desautels (Denali), Ms. Young (Tortugas), Ms. Farfaglia (Arches and Zion), and Mr. Helme (Acadia). Each winning TA received donuts and hot chocolate during a recent afternoon TA.



PTA NEWS

Questions?
ColchesterMiddleSchoolPTA@gmail.com

NEXT MEETING

**TUESDAY
FEBRUARY 4TH
6:00 PM
CMS LIBRARY**

BOX TOPS ARE MOBILE!



BUY

BOX TOPS PRODUCTS

Look for the logo. You can find it on hundreds of products you know and love.



SCAN

YOUR RECEIPT

No more clipping. Tap the scan button and snap a photo of your receipt within 14 days of purchase.



EARN

CASH FOR YOUR SCHOOL

It's that easy! Box Tops earnings are identified and automatically updated online.

No more clipping or sending your box tops to school. All you need is your phone! Download the all new Box Tops app, shop as you normally would, then simply scan your store receipts to find participating products. The app will automatically credit your school's Box Tops earnings online. [Learn more here.](#)

Twice a year, CMS receives a check and can use that money to buy items for the school! Please consider downloading the app and scanning your receipts!

The PTA is need of your support. They meet every other month for about an hour in the evening in the CMS library. Please plan to attend their next meeting on Tuesday, February 4th at 6pm in the library to learn more about the organization and how it supports the CMS staff and students.

Thank you



From the faculty and staff at CMS:
A HUGE thank you to our PTA for providing a day of snacks for the staff the day before the December vacation! We all were appreciative of the healthy and not so healthy goodies left for us that day.