



COUGAR NEWS

A MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR CMS FAMILIES

• FEBRUARY 2020 •



LETTER FROM THE PRINCIPAL

Dear Parents and Families,

On Wednesday, February 5th, CMS spent the morning celebrating and learning about wellness. On that morning, after TA, students were able to select two activities to participate in. There were many options including board and card games, music kahoot, mindful coloring, silent reading, basketball, origami, lego challenges, painting, yoga, stretching, crafts, card making and more.

The morning also included a school wide assembly with a focus on the harmful effects and policies around drugs, specifically vape materials and vaping, cigarettes and smoking and marijuana and smoking. Dr. Keith Robinson, a pediatrician from UVM Health Network, spoke to the student body about the physical harms of the above mentioned substances on the developing brain and lungs. Mark Jacobs, one of our Colchester Police Officers shared the legal ramifications for students caught possessing or using these materials. And finally, Dovid Yagoda, our Assistant Principal, let students know the school rules and policies for bringing, using or sharing drugs in the school.

A few Student Council representatives spoke to the audience about upcoming Spirit Week next week, February 10th through February 14th. Each day will have a different theme and students and staff are invited to dress to the theme. They are as follows:

Monday - Crazy Sock Day
Tuesday - Comfy Clothes Day
Wednesday - Crazy Hair Day
Thursday - Matchy Matchy Day
Friday - Hat Day

DATES TO KNOW

FEBRUARY

- 5 Early Release Day - students dismissed at noon
- 7 Dance 6:00-7:30 (New Time)
- 24-3/2 School Vacation - Winter Break

MARCH

- 3 Student conferences 10:30-6:30
- 5 Basketball Banquet 6:30 pm CMS Cafe
- 7 CSD Band Concert 10:00 am
- 10 8th Grade Dance Committee 6:00 pm Library
- 19 PE Dance Show 6:00 pm CHS Gym

Continued...

The Student Council explained Penny Wars which will take place next week. Each grade level will compete with the others to raise the most money for blood cancer patients in our area by making a donation to the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. Students are encouraged to bring their pennies and other loose change to contribute to the fund raiser. By dropping pennies in their grade level jar, points add up - one point for each penny. But, if students drop larger coins into their non-grade level jars, they will cause those grade levels to lose points - a nickel subtracts five points from the jar, a dime ten points, and so on. The winning grade level will win a prize.

We concluded the assembly with a performance by our CMS cheer team!

The day also included an opportunity for some students, by choice, to participate in World Read Aloud Day. This was celebrated in the library with three authors who virtually visited with our students. One of the authors, Chris Tebbetts, read from his newest book. Students listened and then were able to ask questions of the author.

Our next Early Release Day on April 8th will provide another opportunity for our students and staff to celebrate school community together.

Respectfully,

Michele



INFORMATION FOR 8TH GRADE FAMILIES

Yearbook Photos! Please send in a baby picture of your 8th grade student via email to: tamara.tobin@colchestersd.org. Please make sure to include your child's name. If you would rather, you can send an actual photo into the front office in an envelope labeled with your child's name. **Deadline for submission is Friday, February 21st!**

On February 18, 19, and 20, our 8th grade students will participate in the following high school transition activities: setting up their Naviance accounts, taking a writing and a learning styles inventory. All of these will happen during the school day at CMS.

Please plan to attend the 8th Grade Parent Dance Committee Meeting on Tuesday, March 10th at 6pm in the library. Come help plan and support the preparations for the 8th Grade Send Off Dance scheduled for Friday, June 5th at 6pm.



INFORMATION FOR 5TH GRADE FAMILIES

Please join us for 5th Grade Parent Information Night on Wednesday, May 13th at 6 pm in the CMS Cafeteria. During this evening you will meet the CMS administrators and hear from them, students and other staff about the transition activities that will happen in the spring to prepare your children to enter 6th grade in the fall. You will also get to see what the day in the life of a 6th grader looks like and hear from current 6th grade students about their experiences. There will be time for questions and answers.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

YEARBOOKS

Yearbook Photos! Please send in a baby picture of your 8th grade student via email to:

tamara.tobin@colchestersd.org. Please make sure to include your child's name. If you would rather, you can send an actual photo into the front office in an envelope labeled with your child's name. **Deadline for submission is Friday, February 21st! Yearbook orders are due on Friday, February 21st!**

The cost is \$20. Orders can be made online at: <http://jostensyearbooks.com/?REF=A08744870>. Order forms are also available and will be sent home with students. Please make checks payable to CMS Yearbook. If you need financial assistance, please email Michele.cote@colchestersd.org.

BATHROOMS

The CMS administration is seeing a concerning uptick in student behavior surrounding leaving classes and using the bathrooms. The increase in traffic is resulting in disruption to the learning environment, destruction in the bathrooms, accessibility issues for students, and behaviors that are putting students at risk. Please know the CMS administration is committed to creating a safe, respectful community, and is working hard to address this issue. Students found to be over using the bathrooms or misbehaving in the bathrooms may have parents contacted or a detention assigned.

STUDENT CONFERENCES

A reminder student conferences will be held on Tuesday, March 3rd from 10:30-6:30. Students will be sharing their growth and areas of continued focus in both their academic and non-academic learning through the lens of the Learn Essential Expectation. At CMS we define Learn as participate, persevere, and problem solve.

RECESS

As we continue to improve the recess experience for our students, we are looking for items from families who may be able to donate new or gently used indoor or outdoor games. We are hoping to get board games and card games for use indoors. Outdoor items include Can Jam, frisbees, Yard Yahtzee, Ladder Ball, Corn Hole, assorted balls and other outdoor games. If you can make a donation, please bring or send it into school and thank you in advance.

The outdoor expectations we have for our students are the following:

- RESPONSIBLE - Use equipment appropriately
Return borrowed equipment
- RESPECTFUL - Include all who want to participate
Be accepting of others
- SAFE - Keep hands, feet, and objects to yourself
Use appropriate tone and language
Use equipment appropriately

WHAT'S GOING ON AT CMS

CHEER COMPETITION

The Cougar Cheerleaders recently competed in the Northern Vermont Athletic Conference Cheerleading Competition on January 25, 2020. After months of hard work and dedication, the Cougars took home 2nd place in the Large Middle School Division. This is a first time placement for Colchester in the NVAC Cheerleading Competition. The cheerleaders took charge and owned the blue mat! Great job CMS Cheerleaders!!



SPORTS NEWS

On January 23rd 8th grader Kelli Cieplicki scored her 500th point in her middle school basketball career in a game vs. Fairfield. "It is quite an accomplishment that I have never seen at the middle school level" Coach Olson said. "I have enjoyed coaching her every minute of the last three years." Cieplicki's 500 points is just one of the highlights to a very successful season on the court for all the CMS teams. The 4 teams have combined for 38 victories with only 6 loses this winter. With the boys "A" team still undefeated.



Kelli with Coach Olson and the ball she scored the 500th point with, signed by all her teammates.

WHAT'S GOING ON AT CMS



CREPES IN FRENCH CLASS

Our 7th grade French students learn more than just how to speak the language in French class. Each year, as part of the cultural understanding of the country, students view videos and photos of French culture and get to cook a French food in class - crepes! This is a big undertaking and our students look forward to the cooking and eating experience each year.

Restorative Justice

About three years ago the student council branched out into Restorative Justice. Restorative Justice is a way to help people get to know each other better, work out conflicts, and address what's going on in a community. At CMS we have worked on making the school a safer place both mentally and physically. We have done countless conflict circles, which are circles in which we have usually two people who are having a conflict and we ask questions and have them talk about how they are feeling and what they believe is happening. This year we are also starting to do community circles. These usually take place in TAs and are about whatever the Circle Keeper feels needs to be addressed. Over the course of the past three years we have had at least three people whose jobs involve restorative justice come into the school to properly train us in how to run a circle. This is the first year that non-student council members will get to be trained. This is also the first year that the teachers are being trained as well. I am happy to know that both students and teachers are being trained to help facilitate restorative justice in the school. - Alison Winslow!



Dance Residency and Evening Performance!

The CMS Physical Education Department is excited to announce an amazing artists-in-residence experience happening at CMS this March. Sarah Cover (Urban Dance Complex) and Jessica Ashton (Up North Dance Studio) are guest educators who will be teaching our students hip-hop dance from March 5th through March 19th. They bring over ten years of teaching experience in similar school-based programs in Vermont. Sarah and Jess will teach our students for five classes during their scheduled physical education times. Each class will create unique hip hop dances during the two weeks and then will present them during two performances on March 19th. The dress rehearsal will occur in the afternoon for the student body, in the middle school gym. This will be a closed performance due to limited space.

Parents and the community are invited to watch the dances that evening at the high school gymnasium. Showtime is 6:00pm.



NEXT MEETING

**TUESDAY
MARCH 10TH
6:00 PM
CMS LIBRARY**

PTA NEWS

Questions?

ColchesterMiddleSchoolPTA@gmail.com

Our PTA is looking for folks who are willing to pick up bottles from the CMS bottle hut located near our outdoor basketball court and drop them off at Cap and Cork. We are looking for people who can either commit to a period of time for picking up and dropping off or once in awhile. Dropping off is easy. All you have to do is let the staff at Cap and Cork know you are leaving bottles for CMS. You don't need to wait around for the bottles to be counted. The store takes care of it after you leave and credits our account. The bottle hut is the primary fundraiser for our PTA which provides funding to the school for student activities and teacher and staff recognition.



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 March 10th at 6pm in the library to help plan and support the preparations for the 8th Grade Send Off Dance scheduled for Friday, June 5th at 6:00 pm.