



# Cotrone's Character Corner

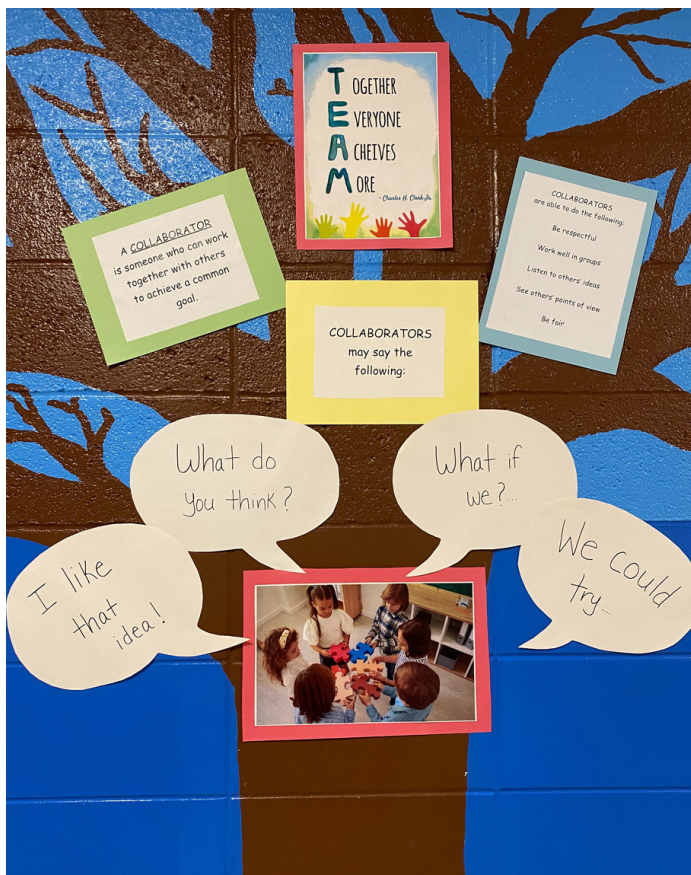
A Monthly Newsletter from School Counselor, Connie Cotrone

## DECEMBER 2023



### Character Education

The theme of the month for December is "collaborator." Students learned that a collaborator is someone who can work together with others toward a common goal. Students learned they are collaborators when they are on teams, during games at recess, in PE class, in after school sports & activities or working with groups in the classroom. Our Character Tree this month indicated traits people should have when they collaborate and provided examples of productive ways to communicate when working with others.



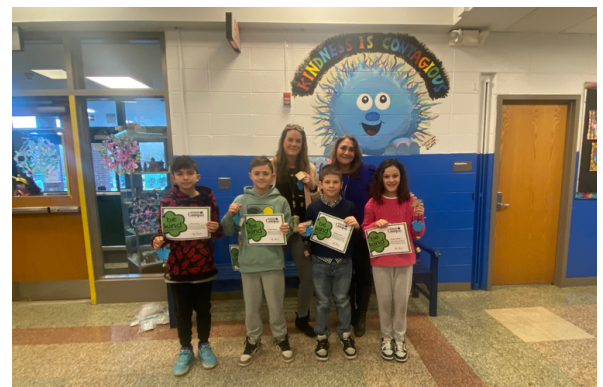
### STAR Students

Students at Columbus are continuing to show behaviors that are responsible, respectful & safe. For the month of December, staff specifically focused on rewarding STAR behavior that was above and beyond what students are expected to do. Names of all December recipients were announced each week and STARS have been placed in the cafeteria celebrating their accomplishments. Please see a comprehensive list of all our December STARS.

Lily Ann Stallone	Ella Amy	Sienna Summa
Kayla Hernandez	Brian Clifford	Jake Teich
Leo Rodopoulos	Eli Skariah	Sienna Brown
Bethany Lucia-Cotter	Giada Gutta	Cecilia DeBiase
Gustavo Gregorio-Salazar	Alyssa Carter	Sofia Damico
Anthony Pippo	Anna Fitzpatrick	Jessica Arcuri
Anthony Arcieri	Massimo Pannone	Harper Gjinaj
Adaly Rodriguez-Villar	Masami Okamoto	Gwen Trezza
Elizabeth Baez	Sofia Fasano	Maibel Griffin
Cate Cuffari	Lena Samagaio	Logan Karol
Amir Celaj	Frank Taylor	Edward Kardan
Shaban Celaj	Joey Ballerini	Sonia Salomone
	Julian Kamberi	



Ben's Bells is a program we use to promote the practice of intentional kindness. Each month students and staff nominate people who have shown genuine acts of kindness. Congratulations to the following recipients for the month of December.





# Making a connection...



How to reinforce character education at school and home



## Collaborating with our Community

Student Council, led by 5th grade teachers Christine Galbo & Maureen Valvano, has been busy this month organizing a winter toy drive to support the Children's Village in Dobbs Ferry. Students, families and faculty collaborated for this effort and donated many new toys, crafts, stuffed animals, games, gift cards, among many other items to brighten the holidays for others.

Thanks to all who contributed for your kindness and generosity!



There were many other examples of ways our students, faculty and community collaborated this month.

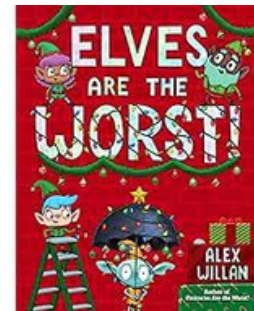
In STEAM, 3rd graders worked on designing and building a trap for a holiday elf. They read the story "How To Catch An Elf" by Adam Wallace & Andy Elkerton, and were then challenged to build a trap for the holiday elf using only the materials given. In small groups they went through the engineering design process to plan their traps and build them. This challenge enabled students to work together, share and combine ideas, and problem solve.

Our 5th graders came together to make beautiful holiday music for the Winter Concert. Mr. Alianiello and Ms. Poole facilitated a wonderful event that delighted audiences with fun and talented performances from our chorus and band.

A true collaboration between our school and community was evidenced by the passing of our Instructional Bond. Thank you to our community for showing our students how working together for a common goal benefits all involved.

## What are we reading?

During the month of December, 5th grade students learned about collaboration through coding during their library special. They read "Elves are the Worst!" by Alex Willan, about a goblin that infiltrates the North Pole to prove that goblins are better workers than elves. However, he quickly learned that elves aren't better workers, they are just really good at teamwork. Students then collaborated to solve different coding challenges together.



## What can I do at home?

**Books that encourage collaboration and teamwork:**

**"The Hard Hat for Kids: A Story About 10 Ways to Be a Great Teammate"**  
By: Jon Gordon

**"The Great Spaghetti Challenge: Children's cooking competition book about friendship and teamwork"**  
By: Emma Afia

**"Teamwork Isn't My Thing, and I Don't Like to Share!"**  
By: Julia Cook

**Click on the image below for team building activities at home and for playdates**

