

CHESTER

Elementary School Newsletter



UPDATES:

LET'S CELEBRATE:

February 8: Flower Plower, the MASS DOT snow plow that Chester Students named visits our students and school!

February 12: Warrior Theme Activity Week for American Heart Association's Kids Heart Challenge!

February 12: Playground installation process begins!

February 15: End of cycle 1 before and after school Early Literacy Tutoring for students in grades K-3. We will reach out to families if their student qualifies to participate in cycle 2 (each cycle consists of 36, 40 minute sessions).

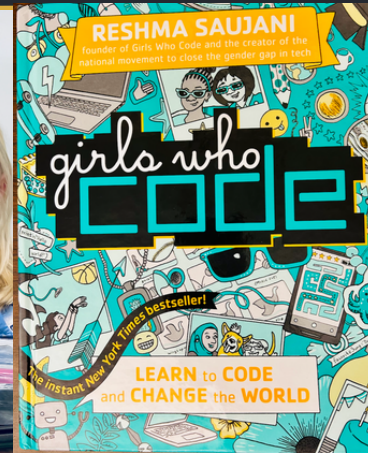
February 15: School Council Meeting at 9am!

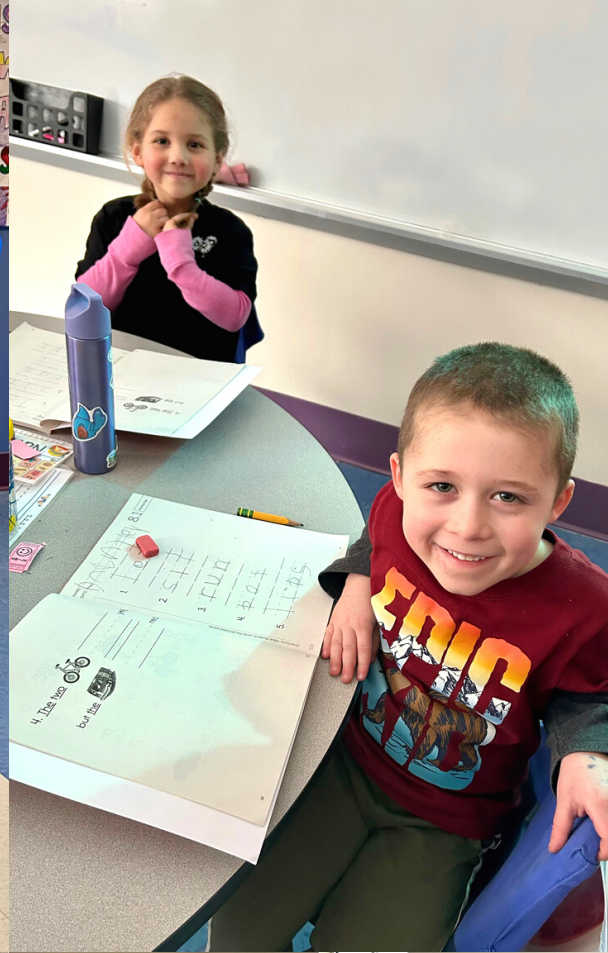
February 19-23: Break

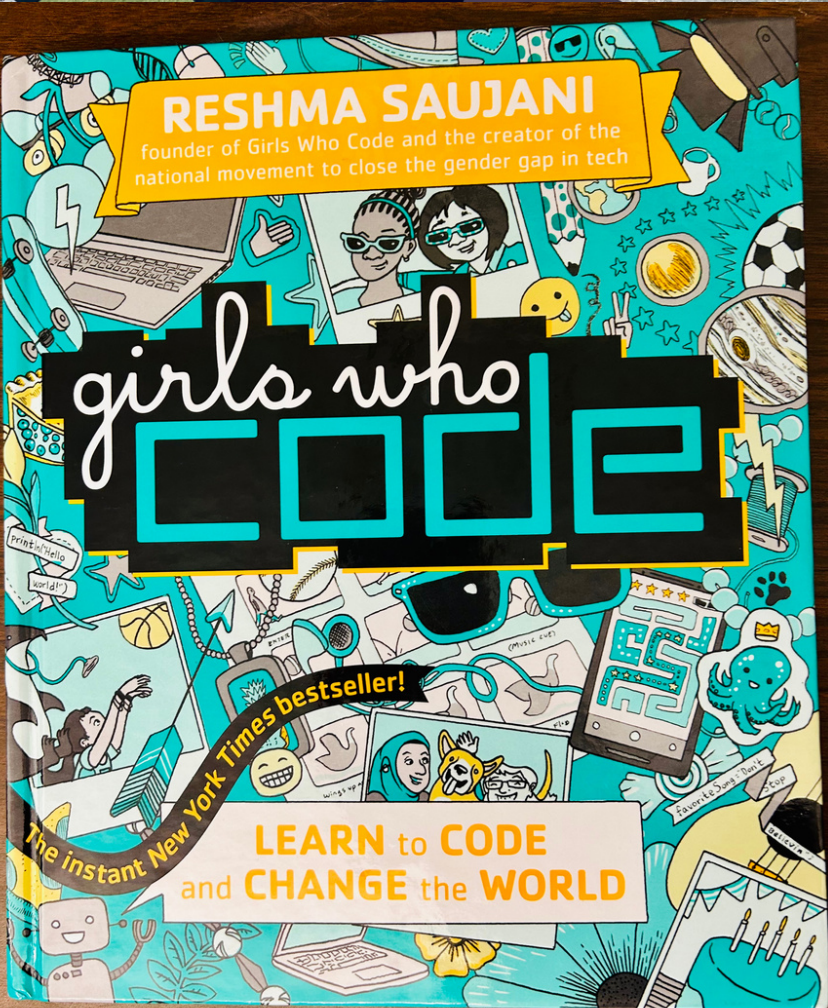
March 19: 1/2 Day for students!

**11:40 am- Pre-K dismissal
11:50 am- K-5 dismissal**

March 29: Good Friday, No School!



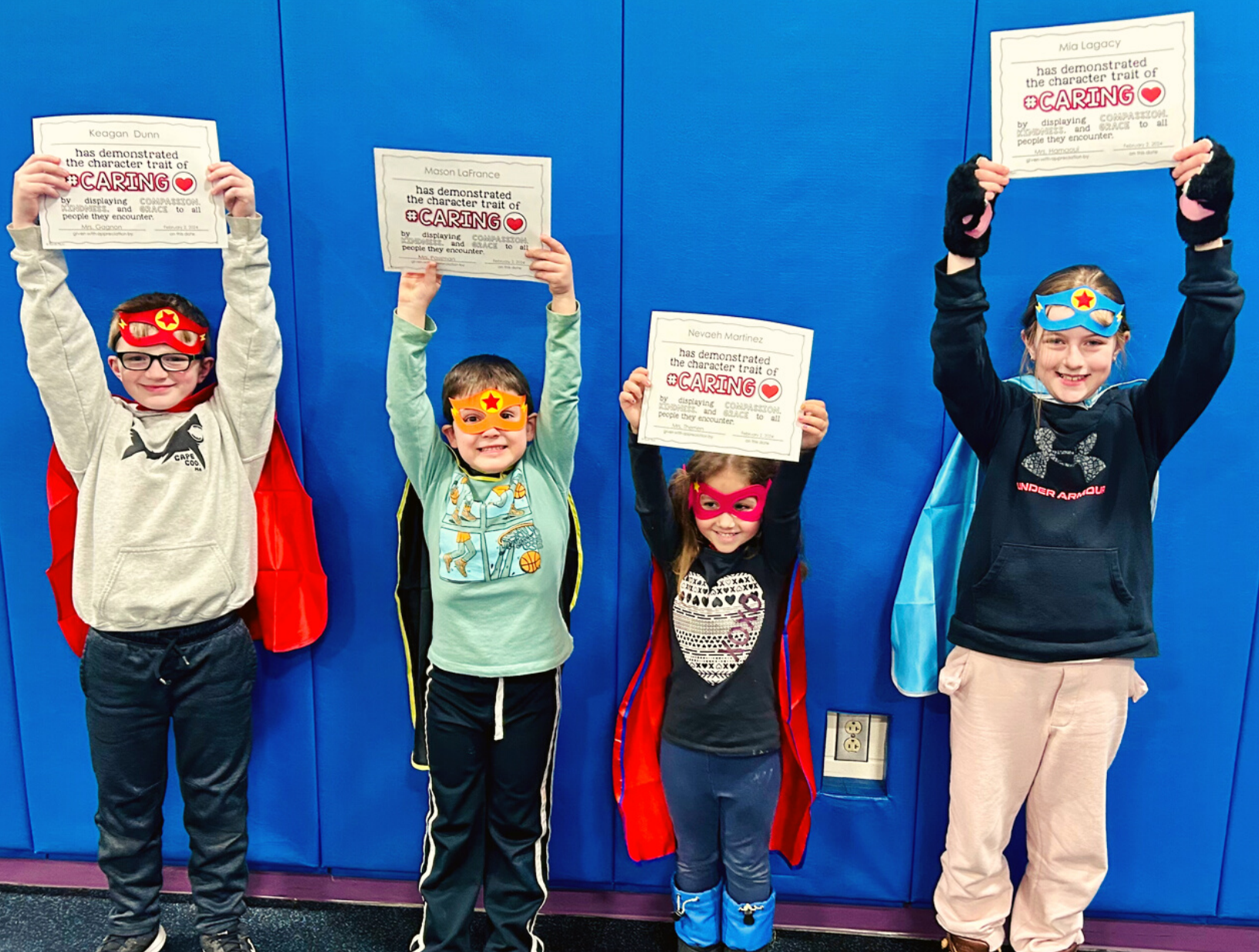








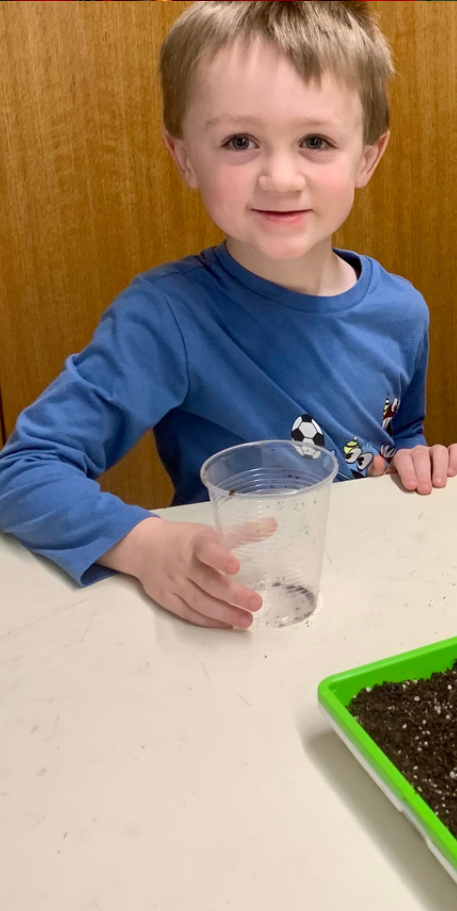














First, scan the QR Code to download the mobile app. Once in the app, tap "Unlock Experience", scan this page to bring it to life and view your missions for how to become the ultimate heart hero.



American Heart Association.

**KIDS
HEART
CHALLENGE**

CELEBRATION!



DEAR PARENT OR GUARDIAN.

Registration is now open! Our community counts on lifesavers like you. Please sign your student up for our **Kids Heart Challenge** so they can learn how to keep their hearts and brains healthy while raising funds to help kids with special hearts. By completing **Finn's Mission**, they'll also learn the lifesaving skill of **Hands-Only CPR** and how to recognize a stroke.

FINN
GRADE 3

JOIN OUR COMMUNITY OF LIFESAVERS

1 REGISTER

**2 COMPLETE
FINN'S MISSION**

It's easy to do on our **AHA Schools app** or by visiting heart.org/Schools.

Students in **Kids Heart Challenge** are raising funds to help kids with special hearts — kids like Finn.

Born with multiple heart defects, Finn spent the first eight months of his life in the hospital. Although he's had more than 18 procedures, today Finn is an energetic third-grader who loves educating others about heart health and helping kids with special hearts.



**REGISTER
TODAY!**

Download our **AHA Schools app** or visit heart.org/Schools.



**SCAN
CHECKS!**

to instantly see your online total update with our **AHA Schools app**.



**HAVE A
MATCHING GIFT?**

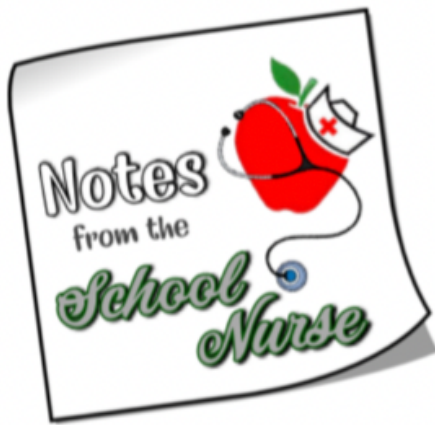
Send your matching gift confirmation (email/photo/screen grab) to matchinggifts@heart.org.

Nationally Supported by
MARCUM
ACCOUNTANTS • ADVISORS

Marcum is a proud supporter of the American Heart Association's Kids Heart Challenge.

For nearly 100 years, the American Heart Association has been fighting heart disease and stroke, helping families and communities live happier, healthier and longer lives.

Visit heart.org/KHCforME for resources in other languages.



The winter brings colder outdoor air, seasonal allergies, and cold viruses, which means runny noses and coughs. It can be difficult to distinguish between what is an allergy, and what could be COVID-19, flu, or cold symptoms. Here are suggestions to navigate through this time of year.

- ✓ If your student has known seasonal allergies, prevention of symptoms is possible when starting allergy medication in a timely manner.
- ✓ If your student has COVID symptoms, please test them at home to ensure they do not attend school and spread the virus to others. If you need test kits, please contact the nurse.

✓ The flu typically is characterized by sudden onset of chills, body aches, fever, and respiratory symptoms.

✓ When in doubt, reach out to Nurse Amanda! adean@grsd.org or 413-685-1364

Reminders

- Please review handwashing and coughing techniques with your student. Handwashing and coughing/sneezing into your elbow help prevent the spread of germs.
- Please send students in with warm clothing: Winter coats, hats, gloves, and boots. Nurse Amanda has extra supplies in the health office, please reach out if you need anything!
- Students should remain home for 24 hours after their last fever (without medication), vomiting or diarrhea episode.

♥ Heart Facts brought to you by the Kids Heart Challenge! ♥

- ★ The average heart beats about 108,000 times per day!
- ★ The heart pumps out about 83 gallons of blood per day!
- ★ Physical activity doesn't just build strong muscles, it strengthens your bones and can improve your emotional well-being.
- ★ Did you know to burn off all the calories from just one soda a kid has to ride a bike for about 30 minutes? A 16 ounce soda contains as much sugar as 20 sugar cubes!
- ★ Being kind is as simple as smiling! Did you know it's easier to smile than it is to frown?
- ★ Smiling reduces blood pressure too!



Thank you for helping keep our school healthy! I hope you all have a wonderful February break!



FOR CHESTER, MIDDLEFIELD, AND BLANDFORD CHILDREN WHO WILL BE 5 ON OR BEFORE SEPTEMBER 1, 2024:

Dear Parents/Guardians:

Welcome to Kindergarten at Chester Elementary School. We look forward to meeting you and your child. We hope that your experience at the Chester School is both positive and productive. This letter provides you with information regarding the kindergarten screening process for students entering kindergarten in September of 2024.

This year we will be using our online registration process. Please go to our website, grsd.org. There you will click on the General information tab. Here you will see a link to Student online registration. You will be able to complete the registration form, upload your child's birth certificate, any court ordered documents, and two proofs of residency. If you are unable to upload the necessary forms, you can mail them to the school or bring them with you to the screening on May 10th. The registration process and submittal of all forms is required by the state and will need to be completed prior to your child starting kindergarten.

Before entering school, a hard copy of the most current physical and immunization form must be submitted to our school nurse. These papers are required to enroll your child in kindergarten. If you have any medical related questions, our school nurse is Amanda Dean and she can be reached at 685-4235.

Please call Chester Elementary School by May 6th to schedule a screening appointment for your child on May 10th. Screenings generally take 30-60 minutes. If your child will not be attending in the fall, please call us so we can take your family off our mailing list. Our phone number is listed at the end of this letter. If your child is currently enrolled in our Preschool you will not need to register online. Please just call the office to set up a screening time.

We are excited to meet you and your child and look forward to working with your family. To schedule your child's kindergarten screening, please call Jen, our school secretary, at **413-685-1361**. Please also feel free to reach out to Jen with any questions related to the kindergarten screening and enrollment process at Chester Elementary School.

Sincerely,

Vanna Maffuccio

Vmaffuccio@grsd.org

Principal



January-February 2024 Chester Elementary School Update:

- We will complete our first round of before and after school Early Literacy Tutoring on February 14th. Our school is engaged in the Massachusetts Early Literacy Tutoring Program funded by the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE), which allows us to provide high quality early literacy tutoring, aligned to the science of reading, to our students in K-3 at no cost to us (Students engage in 40 minute sessions 3x/week before and after school). We plan to engage in a second 36 session cycle of Early Literacy Tutoring from March-June. *High dosage tutoring builds prerequisite and foundational skills to set students up for success with the current grade's core content. All costs for high-dosage tutoring are covered by the Department.
- DESE has just recently provided an additional opportunity for schools to partner with tutoring vendors for no-cost high dosage tutoring in grade 4 mathematics in order to accelerate student learning. We have partnered with Imagine Learning and will be providing evidence based, high quality targeted mathematics instruction to 8 students in grade 4 during their WIN(what I need) blocks beginning on February 5th. *High dosage tutoring builds prerequisite and foundational skills to set students up for success with the current grade's core content. All costs for high-dosage tutoring are covered by the Department.
- We are engaging in a free pilot program with Just Right Readers in order to accelerate student reading achievement through the use of personalized Science of Reading Take-Home decodable books. We will use student data to provide 3 rounds of "just right" phonics based, high quality readers to 24 of our students in grades K-2. Each student will receive a total of 30 books(3 rounds of 10 books). These Take-Home Decodable Packs extend phonics instruction into the home and engage parents and families in reading. Each book contains phonics tips and a qr code that provides direct and easy access to an engaging, short video lesson to help guide parents and students.
- After School Grade 5 Title 1 funded math tutoring began on 1/29/24. Students are receiving 70 minutes of instruction 2 days a week with Mrs. Provost(5th grade CES teacher) or Mr. Green(7th grade grsd math teacher).
- We started a Girls Who Code Club on January 11th after reading about the opportunity in the 12/18/23 edition of the Commissioner's Weekly Update. This club provides free computer science resources, including materials to start a Girls Who Code Club for students in grades 3-5. Students will learn the concepts of loops, variables, conditionals and functions that form the basis of all programming languages. We will receive a free \$300 Amazon Gift Card for forming this club at our school.
- On January 11th we expanded STEAM instruction to our students in preschool. Our STEAM teacher, Mrs. Nicholson is now working with our 3 and 4 year old students on Thursdays.
- We are successfully growing and harvesting cucumbers in our hydroponic garden! Students in third grade harvested and tasted our first batch of cucumbers on January 26th!
- We partnered with Blandford's Marsy Belle Farms to engage our students in kindergarten, grade 1, and grade 5 in a 2 part Microgreens Planting Project. During this enrichment experience, students planted and harvested pea and radish microgreens. Students finished harvesting their microgreens on February 1st.
- A crew from Pro-Playgrounds is scheduled to begin the playground installation process on 2/5/24!
- On February 15th, Kindergarten families will be invited in to watch their students perform skits tied to our ELA curriculum's knowledge building strand.
- On February 16th, fifth grade families will be invited to join us for a living history wax museum exhibit; students will present speeches tied to research projects.
- On February 16th, Betty, a certified service dog, will visit students in their classrooms at Chester.
- Two Chester Elementary School students received Massachusetts Student Achievement Awards for their exceptional performance on the 2022 MCAS test!