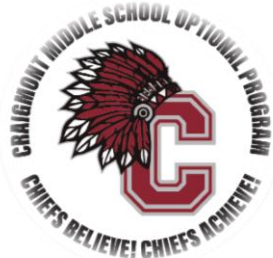


# Optional Scholars Newsletter

2025-2026

Quarter 1



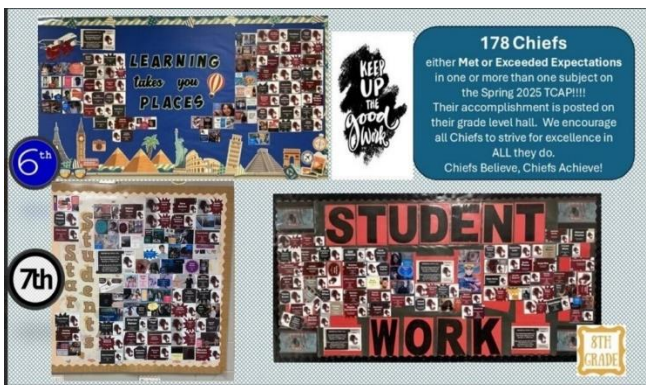
All Optional Scholars are enrolled in Honors courses which help prepare them for High School and College. An

expectation of an Honors course is completion of at least one honors project a semester. Scholars have projects in ELA, Math, Science, and Social Studies. **Please check with your scholar to ensure they are working on their honors projects.**

Optional Scholars participate in International Studies, learning about the cultures of others in our world. Our focus countries for the year are:  
 6th grade – Egypt  
 7th grade – Turkey  
 8th grade – Trinidad and Tobago  
 Memphis in May 2026 – to be announced

Optional Scholars International Projects for First Semester will be shared in November. 😊

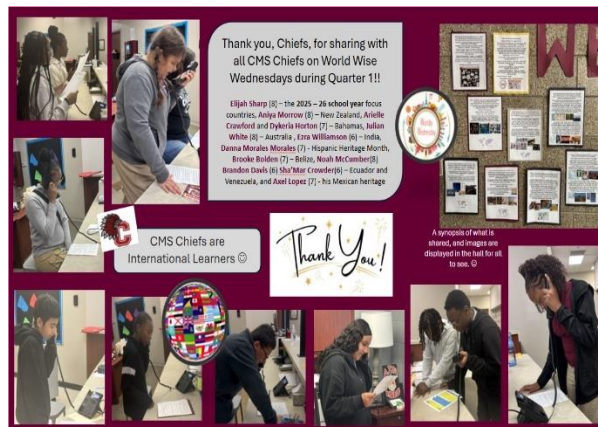
This year, we have **178** scholars being acknowledged for their accomplishments on the Spring 2025 TCAP Assessment. Scholars who Met or Exceeded Expectations on one/more than one section of the test are honored on the Brag Boards! Way to go and continue to strive for excellence in all you do!



We are...  
**C**ollege and Career Ready  
**M**otivated Students  
**C**ollaborative  
**H**elpful  
**I**nternational Learners  
**E**ngaged  
**F**ocused and  
**S**triving for Success

CMS Chiefs are International Learners! Chiefs learn about other places and cultures in their daily lessons and through World Wise Moments, usually on Wednesdays. Volunteers choose a topic to share with their peers over the intercom during morning announcements.

Thank you, Quarter 1 volunteers:



**Elijah Sharp (8)** – the 2025 – 26 school year focus countries, **Aniya Morrow (8)** – New Zealand, **Arielle Crawford** and **Dykeria Horton (7)** – Bahamas, **Julian White (8)** – Australia, **Ezra Williamson (6)** – India, **Danna Morales Morales (7)** – Hispanic Heritage Month, **Brooke Bolden (7)** – Belize, **Noah McCumber (8)** – Ecuador and Venezuela, and **Axel Lopez (7)** – his Mexican heritage



## Hispanic Heritage Month

September 15 – October 15 is the celebration of Hispanic Heritage Month. During the month, our nation celebrates the histories, cultures and contributions of Americans with Hispanic heritage. Countries considered Hispanic are Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Equatorial Guinea, Guatemala, Honduras, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Puerto Rico, Spain, Uruguay and Venezuela – which means Spanish is the primary language spoken there.



Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month at CMS

- Scholar volunteers either shared about their families' Hispanic culture or researched and shared about countries celebrated during Hispanic Heritage Month over the intercom.
- Chips y salsa along with Hispanic music were enjoyed at lunch on October 7, 2025.
- Displays in the hall gave CMS information about Hispanic Heritage Month and the countries.

## "International Bites" for Optional Scholars



For the **August** Lunch and Learn, Ms. Bini was the travel agent. **Germany** is a country she has visited, and

it is also where her great grandfather immigrated from in 1912.



Germany was home to the Brothers Grimm – if you are familiar with Hansel and Gretel (Hänsel und Gretel), Cinderella (Aschenputtel)

Rumpelstiltskin (Rumpelstilzchen) and Snow White (Schneewittchen), it is thanks to them! Jacob and Wilhelm had a knack for taking fables from around the world and uniting them with their own "over-arching tone, style, and moral compass". Speaking of fairy tales, Germany is known for its castles that look like they belong in a fairy tale. The Cuckoo Clock originated in the Black Forest area in the early 1600s.

German immigrants brought the tradition of a Christmas tree with them as they settled in new areas. Today the Christmas tree is a tradition acknowledged worldwide.



Scholars tasted Quiche Lorraine and Apfelschorle (App-fell-shore-le). Quiche Lorraine, a traditional German dish, is a savory tart that originated in the region that was once part of Germany. The dish is characterized by its flaky pastry crust, creamy filling, and various ingredients such as eggs, cream, and sometimes smoked bacon or cheese. The term for sparkling apple juice in German is

"Apfelschorle." It is a popular drink made from apple juice mixed with sparkling water, making it less sweet and more refreshing. Visitors from

Brownsville Road Elementary and Craigmont High were a part of the celebration. Also,

Thank You, **Jasmine Wise** (8), for your help on that day 😊.



### **Chiefs Believe! Chiefs Achieve!**



**Samyriah Carter** (7) and **Adrian Perez Najera** (7) were our tour guides in **September to Chile**.

Informational Bites - Chile is the longest country stretching approximately 2670 miles down the western edge of South America. Santiago is the capitol city. The Gran Torre Costanera can be visited there. It is the tallest building in all of South America! Scholars laughed as we learned about the Elephant seal,

an animal that can be smelled and heard before you see it! The Maoi statues on Easter Island are a popular tourist destination. Scholars can only speculate at how they got there and why because there is not any written history! Also, did you know there are mummies in Chile. The Chinchorro mummies in northern Chile are **OLDER** than the mummies in Egypt!

Tasty Bites – Scholars tried Empanadas de pino, or Chilean Beef Empanadas from El Sabor (665 Avon Rd). Empanadas are often enjoyed for lunch on Sundays and are the centerpiece of the Fiestas Patrias (Independence Day celebrations). Chicha is a traditional fermented drink made from fruits, typically grapes or apples. Ours was made from purple corn! It is commonly consumed during Chile's National Day celebrations and is often enjoyed in social gatherings.



Please reach out if you have any questions or concerns for your Optional Scholar(s). If you need help with PowerSchool access, please let me know



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