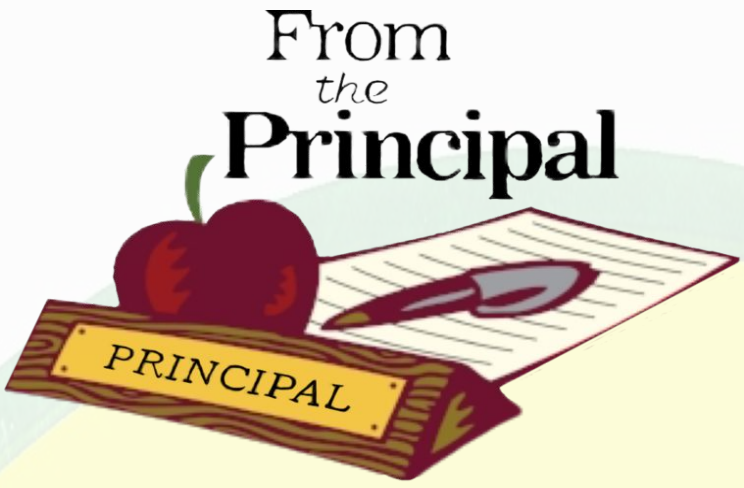
COLOMA HIGH SCHOOL NEWSLETTER

# Comet Comments

SCHOOL ISSUE - DECEMBER 2023

## From the Principal




By the time of this newsletter is published, your child will have finished their first semester classes and will be looking forward to next semester's schedule. One of the great things about starting the second semester is the idea of a fresh start. Being able to begin classes fresh helps us all concentrate and learn from behaviors and choices that we may have made.

When students get back from break, Coloma High School will be gearing up for standardized testing such as the MSTEP, PSAT, and SAT. Students will also complete the second round of NWEA testing which helps the district progress monitor our school wide goals. Our underclassmen will be getting information about classes offered at Coloma to help them make decisions for the 2024-2025 school year. Our Seniors will be looking forward to graduation. Not to mention sports and other extracurricular activities like prom. The second semester is jam packed for students.

With all of that being on the schedule for the next five months, it is also important for all stakeholders to take into account that we cannot lose sight of what is most important. Our students need to make sure that they are able to keep up with their daily work. The list of items from above feeds off of how the students progress on a daily basis. Teachers and students will work together to make sure tasks are accomplished and goals are met. Teachers and parents also need to have an open line of communication so parents can help guide students through these priorities.

It is important to have conversations with your child about priorities. All adults feel overwhelmed at times. Your child is no different. Talk to your child about accomplishing one task at a time. Writing down what needs to be accomplished and checking off tasks completed can give students a sense of accomplishment. Also, tell your child it is ok to ask for help. It is a skill to become a self-advocate. It is not a sign of strength to keep struggles inside. Let them know they can reach out to you. Our teachers and staff are here to help and support your child as well. If your child needs other resources, we can reach out to outside resources to help as well. We are in this together. Sometimes a reminder that our school community wants all students to achieve success helps when we feel we are in a rut.

I wish all of you a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! I am excited for the beginning of next semester and seeing what our students accomplish!

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

**Jan 8 - Semester 2 begins**

**Jan 9 - Report Cards posted on PS**

**Jan 10 - Late Start: School starts at 10 am**

**Jan 12 - Blood Drive**

**Jan 15 - MLK Day: No School**

**Jan 24 - Late Start: School starts at 10 am**

**Jan 26 - Winterfest**

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**INSPIRE TO ACHIEVE –EMPOWER FOR SUCCESS**

# COUNSELOR'S CORNER

**SELF-CARE FOR HIGH SCHOOLERS**

How often do you hear the term self-care in reference to adults? Well it applies to high school students as well, maybe even more. The teenage years can be challenging, and good self-care is important to keeping every high schooler grounded and thriving in school, with friends, and at home with family.

Here are some tips to make sure you are taking the right care of yourself.

- **MOVE YOUR BODY**
  The body-mind connection is real in high school. As you launch into college and adulthood, start a lifelong commitment to physical health by finding the types of exercise you love. Join a sports team, make the most of your PE class, use free online videos for dance or yoga, take walks with your friends. Whatever you enjoy, make a habit of moving your body a bit every day. It will benefit your mood, focus, and overall wellness.

- **NOURISH YOURSELF**
  You know how teachers are always telling you to eat well and get enough sleep the night before a test? Well that advice applies to daily life, not just the night before the ACT or SAT. Your body needs to move, and it also needs the right fuel to keep you on your game: studying, doing homework, working on projects with a group. Try to eat the rainbow in fruits and vegetables every day, get enough protein, and eat junk food in moderation (let's be honest, a high schooler avoiding all junk food is….not happening). High school students need 8-9 hours of sleep each night. That's right 8-9 hours! If you're not getting that, reconsider your bedtime. It's hard with homework, activities, and family commitments, but try as hard as you can to get at least 8. Your focus, happiness, and grades will thank you!

- **FOLLOW YOUR INTERESTS**
  The good news is that colleges are looking for students who go for depth, not breadth, in their clubs and activities. Don't try to do it all, but follow your interests and explore them in more ways than one. Love basketball? Join the team, volunteer to teach the sport to local middle schoolers, and see if you can intern in the summer for a local team. Drama's your thing? Write a play, act in a play, and intern at a local theater. You will be happier now and in the future if you follow your heart and follow your interests to go deep and really find out if this interest can turn into a future profession or lifelong passion. Following your interests will also keep you engaged in something outside of school and help you meet new friends.

- **KEEP STUDYING LIVELY**
  You're going to have to study and do homework a substantial amount to get great grades in high school. Don't view studying as a horrible burden, rather treat it as an activity to prepare you for college, and study like a college student. Find a favorite coffee shop or library to change the scenery of your study space. Create study groups and study with friends. Study outside if the weather is nice. Stay on campus and take advantage of teacher office hours to get the help you need. Use an online tool like Learn to Be, Khan Academy or Study Geek to get help with your homework if you get stuck. Whatever you do, don't study at the kitchen table with your head in your hands for all for years of high school.

Hopefully these tips and other self-care you discover on your journey will help you stay healthy and successful through the four years of high school and beyond.

## Sophomores

Interested in possibly earning a college degree while in high school…for FREE? You may want to consider applying for the Early/Middle College (EMC) program. Students are ONLY able to apply for the EMC program in their sophomore year and there is an application process. Don't pass up this amazing opportunity!

**Informational Meetings for Early/Middle College (EMC):**
December 12, 2023 6 PM at Bertrand Innovation Center
December 13, 2023 6 PM at Berrien RESA

**!!! EMC Applications OPEN on DECEMBER 15th !!!**
Click HERE for more information and for the EMC application!!

## Seniors

Please use the time during Christmas Break to work on completing FAFSA, scholarships, and college applications.

**Importance of Completing FAFSA *(Anticipated to open December 31st)***

Paying for college might feel overwhelming, but there are many ways to reduce the cost to your family.

1. **The first step in securing any kind of financial aid is completing the FAFSA**. To complete the FAFSA, go to **www.studentaid.gov** and create an account. The earlier you complete the FAFSA, the more financial aid is available.

2. Has your student received Medicaid for two consecutive years between ages 9 and now? They may be eligible for the Michigan Tuition Incentive Program (TIP), which provides significant financial assistance at various institutions. Complete your FAFSA and go to the MiSSG Student Portal to determine your eligibility at: **www.michigan.gov/mistudentaid.**

3. Whether or not students qualify for financial aid, everyone can apply for scholarships. Scholarships fall into three general categories:

   a. **National/state scholarships** are often large prizes with large applicant pools and can be found through reliable websites such as Fastweb and CollegeBoard.

   b. **Local scholarships** are available to CHS students or Berrien County students only, and applications are available **NOW** at: **www.berriencommunity.org.**

   c. **School/program-based scholarships** are listed on college websites and are only available to accepted students who meet certain eligibility requirements. We recommend that students focus on local and college-based scholarships.

**Questions?**

Please feel free to contact Mr. Shaffer with any questions at: gshaffer@ccs.coloma.org or our College and Career Advisor, Chris Coburn, at ccoburn@ccs.coloma.org

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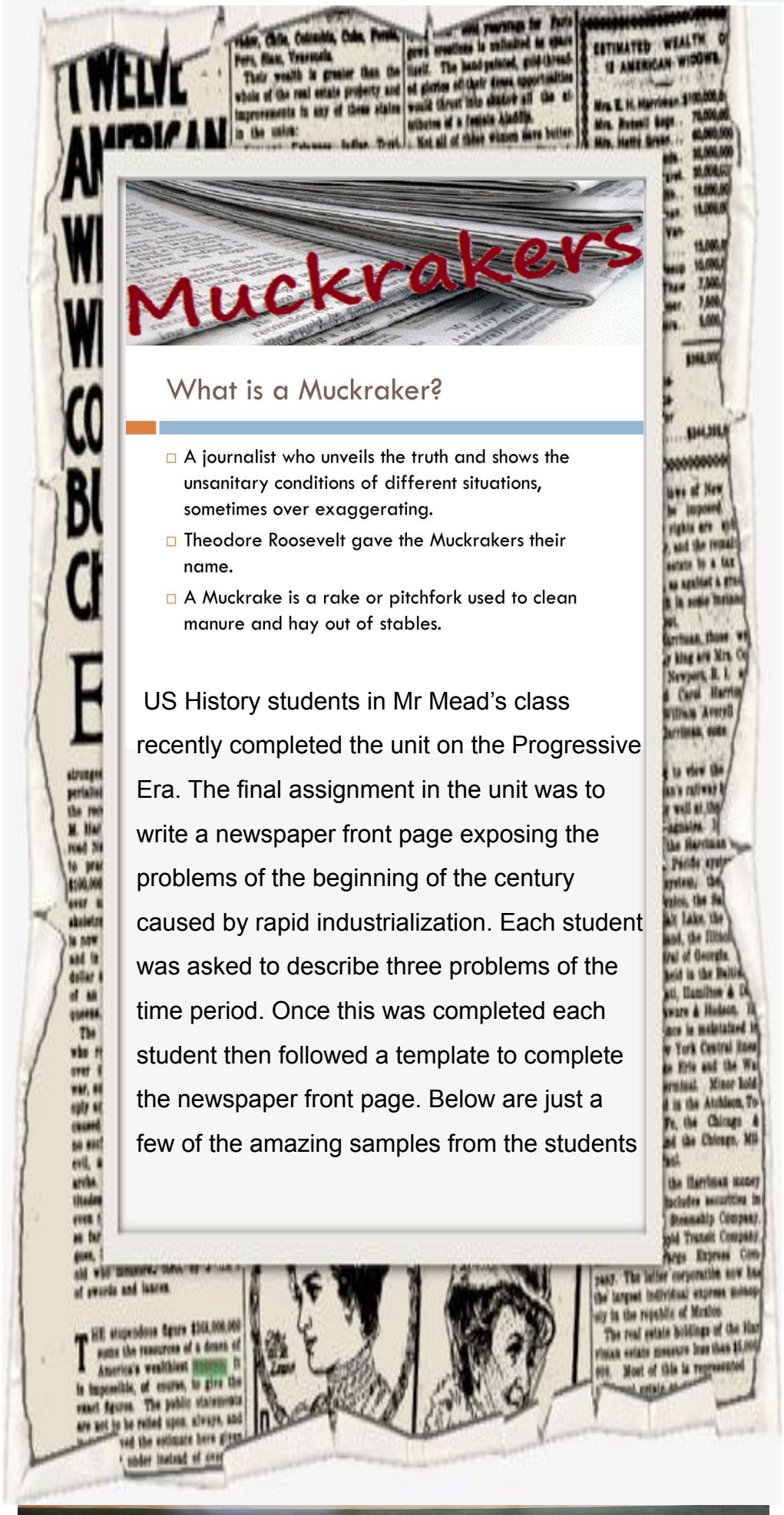
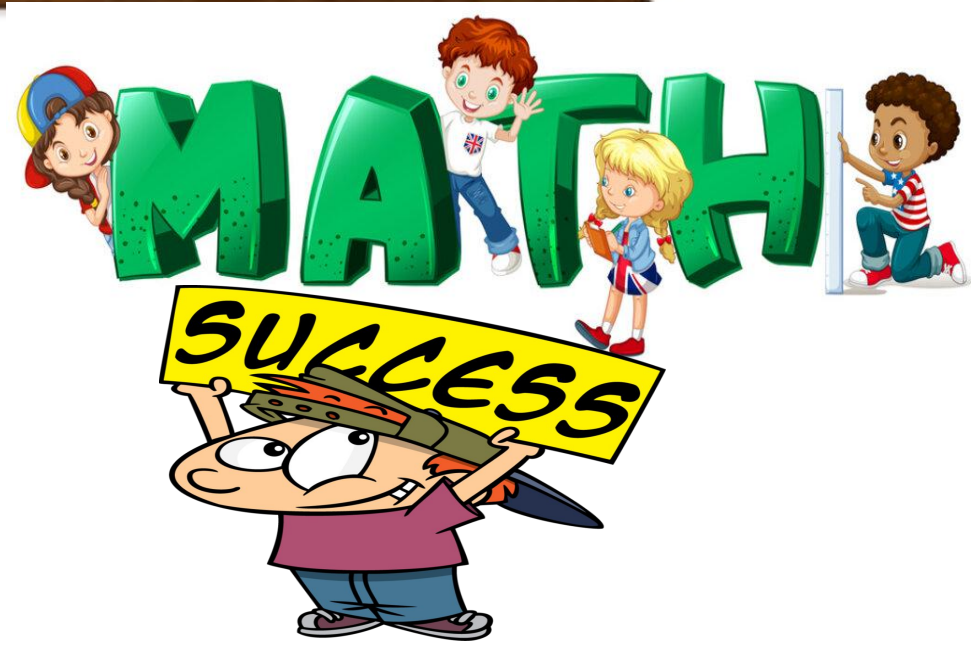
# classroom NEWS

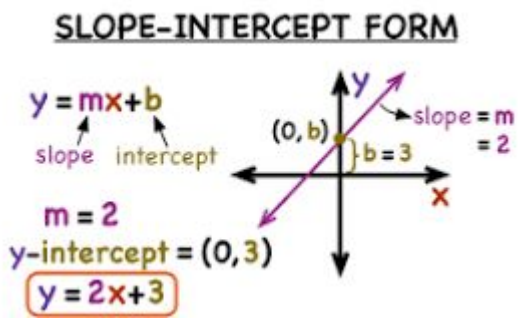



US History students in Mr Mead's class recently completed the unit on the Progressive Era. The final assignment in the unit was to write a newspaper front page exposing the problems of the beginning of the century caused by rapid industrialization. Each student was asked to describe three problems of the time period. Once this was completed each student then followed a template to complete the newspaper front page. Below are just a few of the amazing samples from the students




Students in Algebra 1 have improved their understanding of slope-intercept also known as "$y = mx + b$". The class average was a score of 55.9% on the practice test but thanks to efforts reviewing the class average improved to a score of 70.2% on the test 2 days later! Overall, 69.4% of students were proficient on the test after only 49.0% of students were proficient on the practice test.

Slope-intercept thinking and equations are used all the time in the real world. An example of this would be the equation $y = -7x + 28$ which models the relationship between cups of lemonade demanded "$y$" based on the price of the lemonade "$x$". In this problem, the dependent or "$y$" variable is lemonade and the independent or "$x$" variable is the price of the lemonade. The "$m$" of "$-7$" is the *movement* or *slope* in the equation which indicates that the number of cups demanded decreases by 7 for every $1 the price is increased. Meanwhile, the "$b$" of "$28$" is the *beginning value* or *intercept* of the cups of lemonade demanded when the price of the lemonade is free ($0).




Congratulations to all the students who developed their proficiency on understanding the most important part of the 1st semester of Algebra 1. Good luck to all students as the semester finishes!



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MICHIGAN DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

MRS PROMOTING ABILITIES
Michigan Rehabilitation Services

Special education offers students many different types of support; individual accommodations, resource room, and co-taught classes to name a few. Did you know that your special education student is also offered services to help them transition from high school to adult life? One particularly helpful resource is Michigan Rehabilitation Services (MRS). MRS empowers individuals with disabilities to achieve independence, employment, and to participate in the community. They address the unique needs of individuals and provide support and services to enhance employment prospects, improve quality of life, and promote integration into society. One of the primary purposes of MRS is to assist individuals with disabilities in finding and maintaining employment. They work with job seekers to assess their skills, interests, and abilities, and then provide services tailored to their specific career goals. These services encompass job training, resume building, interview preparation, and job placement assistance. They also work with employers to promote inclusive hiring practices and facilitate a smooth transition into employment for individuals with disabilities, helping them to achieve financial stability. Check out their website (https://www.michigan.gov/leo/bureaus-agencies/mrs) as it lists many more of their services and reach out to your child's special education teacher if you have any questions.

# Auto

In the Automotive Technology program students over this 1st semester have learned about many of the systems on an Automobile as well as repair techniques for those systems. 1st Years have completed their Osha safety Certification, learned about lifting cars safely, precision measuring, Vehicle Inspections and completed an Oil Change. 2nd Years have been learning about Wheel Alignments, and Cooling system diagnosis, service and repair. 3rd year students have been learning about electrical diagnostics and wire repair.

Running an Automotive Program is expensive and equipment needs replacement from time to time. On that note I am happy to report that our Equipment Grant application through the State 61C Grant process was successful and we will be replacing two of our oldest vehicle lifts with higher capacity units. We are also adding a new Wheel Balancer from Snap-on John Bean that is part of the NC3 National Training and certification program, this will allow students to earn a certification in Vibration and Harmonic diagnosis and repair. This will expand our existing Snap-on Nc3 certification offerings to three as we already have the Multimeter usage certification and the Battery Testing and Diagnosis certification. The final item we will be receiving as part of the Grant is a Snap-On Triton Scan tool and Lab Scope with guided component testing. This will allow the 3rd year students to expand their knowledge and use a tool that many of our local employers have.

Finally I would like to recognize some of our local businesses that support the Automotive Program by hosting interns and or who sit on our Advisory board. ABC Truck Repair of Coloma, D&V Motorsports of Coloma, Autovalue of Watervliet, Craigs Automotive of Stevensville and Tapper Ford of Paw Paw who sponsors our school for the Ford ACES Program. In addition to these businesses a number of my former students who are working in the industry sit on the advisory board and give back their time and advice to help grow the program and opportunities. These businesses and their employees help to make it possible for us to provide a great education and many experiences beyond what would otherwise be possible. They also provide advice on equipment purchases and what should be focused on in the training process. In short they are very appreciated as they help make the program better!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Mr. Ransom Automotive Tech Instructor.

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# STARFISH AWARD

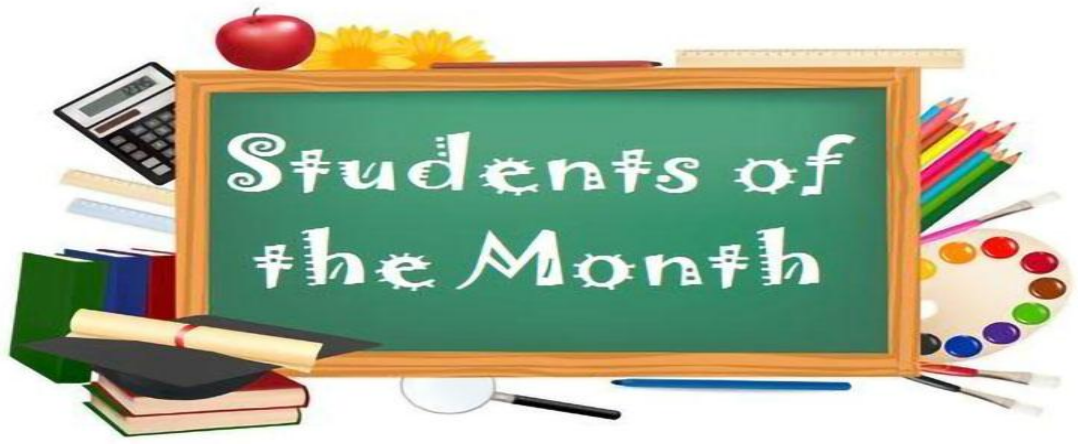
Matt Ford is our StarFish Award winner for this month! He has been teaching at Coloma for 17+ years.  Currently teaching all aspects of Spanish. His favorite part of teaching is the interaction with the students.

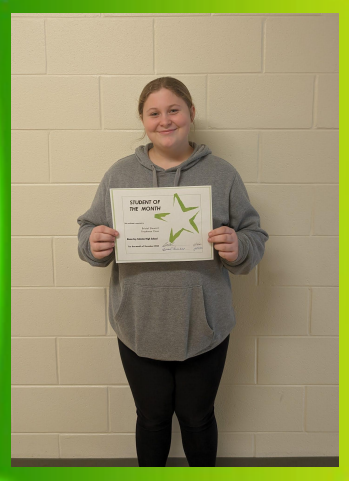
In his spare time, Mr. Ford enjoys playing volleyball, watching or attending Detroit and Michigan State University sports teams events, but most importantly supporting his family.

*Everything is your choice. You can choose to give just enough or your best. You can choose to respond without thinking or with patience. You can choose to give power to people who don't deserve it. Every aspect of life is always your choice!*

Mr. Matt Ford extrudes all of the qualities of an excellent human being and teacher.  My appreciation of Mr. Ford goes back to 2007 when I began teaching and I followed some of his footsteps in planning and executing lesson plans all the while learning to grow great relationships with students.  Mr. Ford, in my eyes is a great teacher, coach, father and human in this crazy world!  Thank you for all that you have done, not only for me but, the students, teachers and parents you have impacted throughout the years!

- *Michael Churchill*



Bristol Stewart - 9th grade

Calli Crisenbery - 10th grade

Chyann Allerton - 11th grade

McKenzie Sing - 12th grade

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