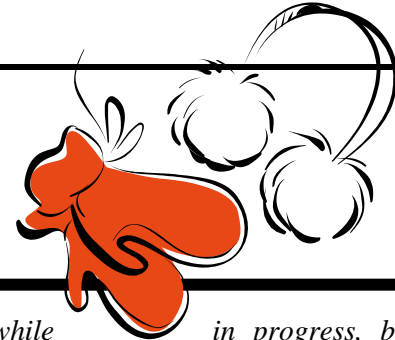


# Principal's Paige

## January 20, 2012



### Celebrating the Halfway Point of the School Year

Next week is spirit week. The following activities are planned:

- Monday – Mismatch Day – wear those mismatched outfits, socks, hair ribbons, etc.
- Tuesday – 50's Day – dress in 50's clothing and join us for a "Sock Hop" at lunch.
- Wednesday - ½ Pajama Day – wear ½ of your pajamas (tops or bottoms).
- Thursday – Jersey Day – put on your favorite jersey and be ready to participate in games at lunch.
- Friday - Buddy Day – dress like your little / big buddy.

We are still looking for a few parents to help out at lunch on Wednesday during the "Sock Hop." We would love to teach the students some dances like "The Twist" and "Jitter Bug." Please contact Kathy Funke at [kfunke@csmh.org](mailto:kfunke@csmh.org) if you are willing to share your dancing talents.

Be sure to also read the teacher's newsletters for more specific suggestions and guidance about the various days.

### Progress Reports

It is the midpoint of the second trimester. Teachers use this as an opportunity to update parents. Progress reports will be mailed home early next week to students in grades 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> who are receiving a C or lower in any class. Teachers who have behavior or academic concerns about students in kindergarten through 6<sup>th</sup> grade have also completed progress reports. These will be sent home via the Friday Folder or your child. We want all students to be successful at CSMH and we need to work as partners to ensure their success.

### Thinking about Thinking

This is the current Habit of Mind that we are working on at school. Teachers are talking about this Habit in class and we have been discussing as a staff how important it is to explicitly teach and model our thinking process. The following is an excerpt from an article by Anthony J. Le Storti, the Director at the Center for Creative Studies.

*Metacognition is that higher level of mental functioning used for planning, directing, monitoring and evaluating our own thinking. We can aid our children's efforts to become self-directed and self-evaluative thinkers by helping them become aware of their metacognitive ability, by assisting them in planning their thinking, and by providing them with guidelines for good thinking. We further help to develop their metacognition by providing prompts and questions that help them to monitor and*

*evaluate their thinking while in progress, by "debriefing" or discussing with them the thinking they did in completing a project, and, providing them with examples of these important processes.*

*By sharing how you think in order to accomplish important tasks, by solving problems out loud and showing how you deal with the complexities of solving a problem or making a decision (to include how you handle wrong turns and mistakes), you provide some important insights and examples of how a mature and accomplished thinker goes about their work.*

### **Developing Metacognition**

*A parent can help a child to develop these abilities by:*

- modeling or thinking aloud
- asking the child to think aloud
- guiding children in developing a thinking plan
- helping them to assess and critique their thinking

*Additionally, parents can prompt children with questions like the following:*

- What is your purpose or goal?
- What kind of end-product do you want to have?
- What kind of problem is this?
- What is your plan?
- What do you know/not know about this?
- What was strong/weak about your thinking?
- What did you learn for the future?

### **Guidelines for Nurturing Thinking**

- Establish and maintain a general atmosphere that promotes thinking.
  - Encourage thoughtfulness.
  - Allow for humor.
  - Discuss subjects in depth.
- Be a model of thoughtfulness.
  - Demonstrate the traits of a good thinker.
  - Share how you think, plan, decide, etc.
- Work to remove the blocks that limit critical and creative thinking in children.
- Use prompts and questions that promote and develop thinking ability.
  - Use divergent questioning.
  - Allow children time to think before answering questions or during discussions.
  - Be accepting without praising.
- Make formal use of strategies and techniques when doing family problem solving and decision making.
- Help children to build on failure.
- Help children to develop self-evaluation skills.
- Encourage children to express positive self-statements about their thinking ability.
- Teach and model open-mindedness.