

# Medford Public Schools

Annual Report: 2025-2026

## The Center for Citizenship and Social Responsibility



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# Mission Statement

The Center for Citizenship and Social Responsibility (CCSR) empowers students to become responsible global citizens, compassionate leaders, and active contributors to their communities. Through student-centered learning experiences and authentic community engagement, students develop empathy, resilience, leadership, and a strong sense of purpose. The CCSR provides opportunities for students to learn, lead, serve, and create positive change while developing civic responsibility, social awareness, and a commitment to the common good. Through these experiences, students are prepared to address real-world challenges and help make the world a better place.

Richard Trotta, Director



# **Brooks Elementary School**

Advisor: Leigh Chasteen

# Medford Family Network Blanket Drive



## **Camryn Morales, Matthew Mucci, Isabelle Ryan-Lornadelli**

CCSR students Camryn, Matthew, and Izzy worked hard to collect donations of fleece fabric to make knot blankets to donate to the Medford Family Network. These students turned the fleece material into multiple cozy blankets. The Medford Family Network distributed blankets to families in our community.

# CCSR & Friends of Medford Library Book Drive



Julia Rafferty, Wylder Kent, Sabrina Mather

CCSR students Julia, Wylder, and Sabrina organized a project to help The Friends of the Medford Public Library. This group collected books for The Friends of the Medford Public Library to sell at their book sale. They collected 8 bags and 2 large boxes of books. The books will be used in the sale to help raise money for The Friends of the Medford Public Library.

# The Dwelling Place Project



Julie Lever, Clementine Beller-Ducey, Cecelia Pompeo

CCSR students Julie, Clementine, and Cecelia worked to collect winter accessories for The Dwelling Place Guests. The Dwelling Place serves the community by addressing food insecurity, and this group provided guests with gloves, hats, and scarves for the winter. They were also able to help prepare and serve a meal at The Dwelling Place.

# Kitty Connection Project



Esme Pendleton, Jazlynn Mazariegos & Evan Lazzaro

CCSR students Esme, Jazlynn, and Evan collected wet cat food for the Kitty Connection in Medford. They hosted a wet cat food collection drive. Kitty Connection is a non-profit that runs solely on donations. Esme, Jazlynn, and Evan wanted to help the cats at Kitty Connection by providing cat food.

# Medford Family Network Coin Drive



Alaina Cinellim, Huzaifah Haq, Louis de Merode

CCSR students Alaina Cinellim, Huzaifah Haq, and Louis de Merode organized a coin drive to support the Medford Family Network. This group of students raised \$497 to purchase toiletries for the Medford Family Network. The students shopped at Target and were able to donate shampoo, conditioner, soap, and toothbrushes/ toothpaste to help the Medford Family Network clients.

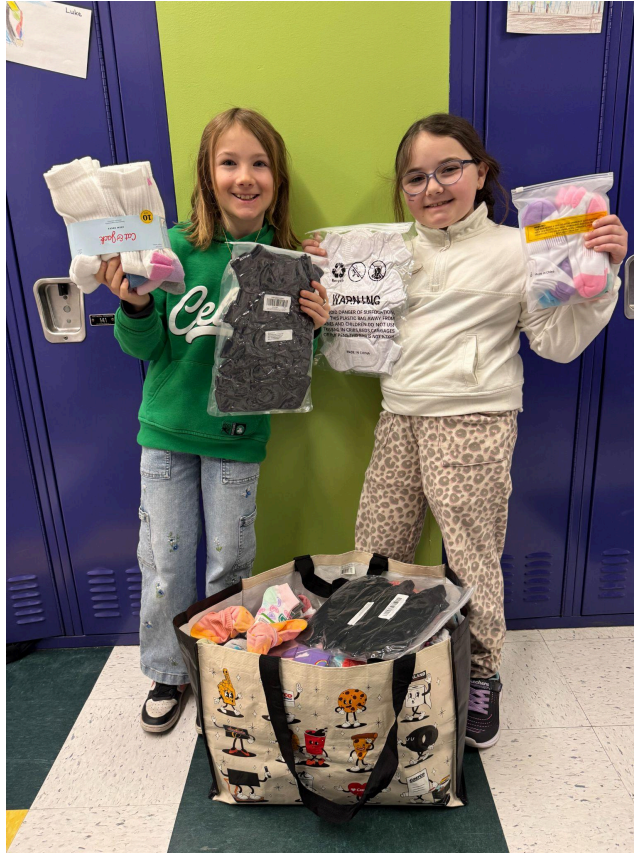
# Boston Rescue League Project



Aoife G, Eliza, Frankie D

CCSR students Aoife, Eliza, and Frankie organized a pet toy drive to support the Animal Rescue League of Boston. They collected over 300 pet toys with their drive. They also had the opportunity to visit the Animal Rescue League of Boston and drop off the generous donations.

# The Foster Box Sock Drive



Victoria Borowski, Mia Mahoney

CCSR students Victoria and Mia organized a sock drive to help The Foster Box. The Foster Box serves local foster families and kids in foster care. Families can “shop” for free and receive packages of clothes, gear, diapers, wipes, carseats, and/or toiletries delivered to their doors. The girls worked hard and collected over 300 pairs of socks for children in foster care.

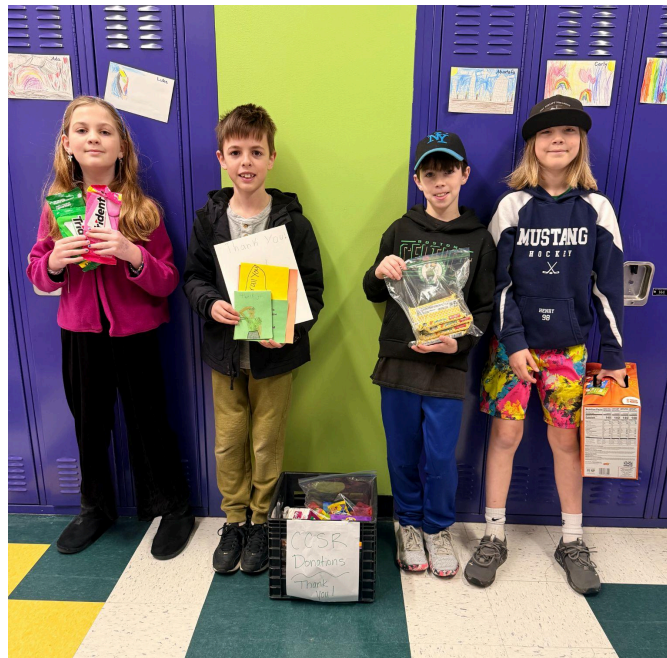
# Firefighter Care Package Project



Catania Romeo, Grace Donnelly

CCSR students Catania and Grace helped Cambridge firefighters with their CCSR project (Grace's dad is a Cambridge firefighter). They hosted a drive and collected snacks, candy, hot chocolate, and hand sanitizer. Grace's dad delivered the care package to his firehouse in Cambridge.

# CCSR Military Care Package Project



Tia Roberts, Lucas Dorta-Reuthinling,  
Colton Dutkiewicz, Waylon Henry

CCSR students Tia, Lucas, Colton, and Waylon wanted to support the military as part of their CCSR project. They hosted a drive and collected snacks, candy, hot chocolate, and hand sanitizer. They were able to send this care package to deployed military troops.



# Roberts Elementary School

Advisor: Ginelle Gaulin-Mckenzie

# Key Chains for MSPCA



Inaya, Huntley, Teddy, Charlotte, Ailish, and Andrei

CCSR students Inaya, Huntley, Teddy, Charlotte, Ailish, and Andrei wanted to help animals. They decided to raise money for the non-profit organization MSPCA. The students planned to sell Key Chains at the Roberts Elementary School STEM Night. The group worked really hard and prepared over 100 keychains to sell. The keychains were a big success, and the group raised \$90 toward their cause! The donations will help MSCPA provide the best possible care and services for homeless, injured, sick, and abused animals.

# Seashells for Medford Recreation



Austen Rich, Emily Mederios, Gianna Antonio, Dario Ladato,  
and James Hickey

The students decided to raise funds for the Friends of Medford Recreation. This nonprofit organization supports the City of Medford, Massachusetts, in providing recreational programs, services, and facilities. These donations will allow Medford Residents to participate in many of the city's great recreational activities. For their project, the CCSR students organized a raffle to raise money. The group raffled off two Seashell Painting Kits to the students at the Roberts School. They also decorated 25 individual seashells, which were given to any student who donated \$5 or more toward the raffle. Altogether, they raised \$130 toward their cause!

## Coin Drive for ‘A Bed for Every Child’



Elliette, Alice, Thienlam, Sasha, Nella, Alek, and Tahlia

CCSR students Elliette, Alice, Thienlam, Sasha, Nella, Alek, and Tahlia continue to raise money for their bed-building project. The students have partnered with the organization ‘A Bed for Every Child,’ whose mission is to ensure that every child in Massachusetts has a safe and comfortable place to sleep. The students planned a Coin Drive to help raise money for their cause. They created a flyer, distributed buckets, and incentivized the school by offering extra recess. The Coin Drive was a huge success; they raised \$870.

# CCSR Teacher Lunch



Elliette, Alice, Thienlam, Sasha, Nella, Alek, and Tahlia

These CCSR students received a \$350 Wegmans gift card to support their Bed Building Fundraiser. They decided to organize a teacher breakfast to raise money for their cause. The group had the teachers pre-order their breakfast orders and had them delivered on November 21st. They served breakfast sandwiches, bagels, yogurt parfaits, coffee, tea, and juice. The students packaged the breakfast orders in baggies and delivered them to the teachers by cart. Overall, they raised \$380 for their cause. The teachers and students really enjoyed this project!

## PAWS Pet Food Drive



Tyler, Yassin, Avery, Sienna, and Serena

These CCSR students were passionate about working with animals. The students have partnered with the organization PAWS (Protection of Animals in Wakefield Society). The students organized a Pet Food Drive to collect supplies for the Pet Food Pantry at PAWS in Wakefield. They collected cat food, dog food, and toys for the animals. During April Vacation, students Sienna and Serena also traveled to PAWS to deliver the donations. They were able to volunteer for the day in the Pet Food Pantry. They had a great time organizing, stocking pet food, and seeing how the organization is run. They even got a chance to hold some baby kittens who were in the office for fostering.

# Community Cooks



Lily, Naima, Austen, Kellan, Frankie & Hanna

These CCSR students partnered with the organization Community Cooks, whose mission is to pair volunteers with community members experiencing food insecurity. Our group was paired with students from Tufts University Prison Initiative, which facilitates creative and collaborative responses to the problems of mass incarceration and racial injustice. The CCSR students at the Roberts had the opportunity to prepare two meals for these individuals. Overall, the CCSR students prepared 60 sandwiches, snacks, fruit, and a dessert for these individuals. The CCSR students also organized a raffle, raising \$160 for Community Cooks.

# Bed Building Project



Elliette, Alice, Thienlam, Sasha, Nella, Alek, and Tahlia

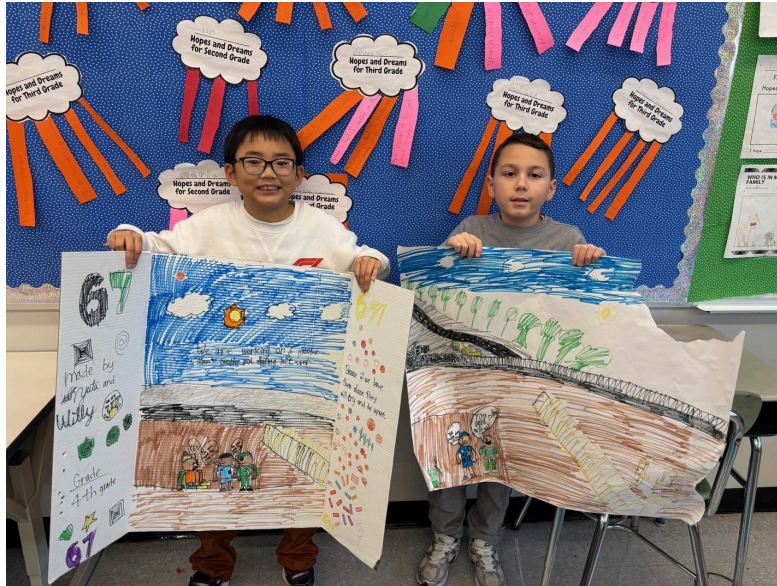
These CCSR students were passionate about helping kids in need and really wanted to participate in building. They decided to partner with the organization “A Bed for Every Child,” which is committed to ensuring that every child in Massachusetts has a safe and comfortable place to sleep. Over the course of two years, the students raised \$3,500! They organized a teacher breakfast, a coin drive, and wrote letters to sponsors to help fund their project. After the fundraising, the students participated in a building event where they built 10 beds that will go directly to children in need. They even recruited other students, teachers, and family members to join the event.



# **McGlynn Elementary School**

Advisor: Natalia Napolitano

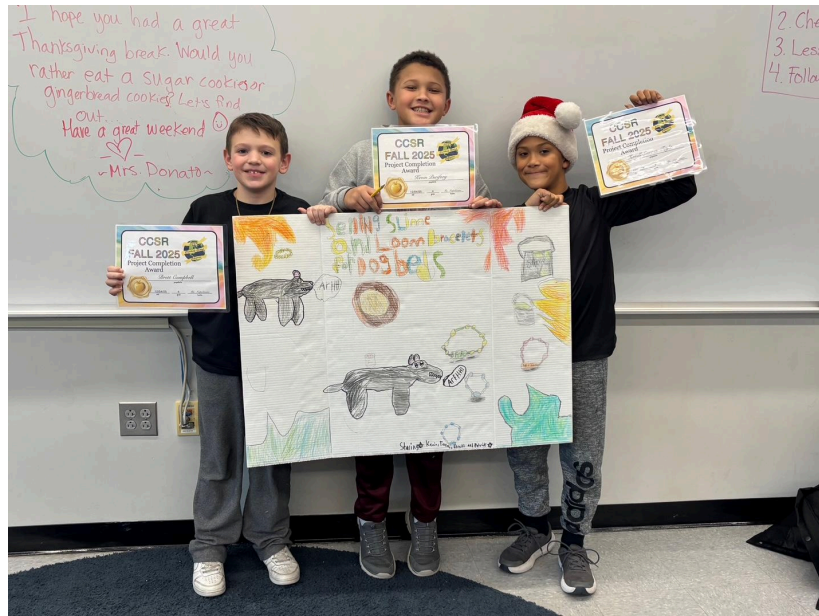
# Belonging Posters



Yuta Kaku and Willy Reyes

Yuta and Willy wanted to create posters to make kids feel included at school. They created posters showing kids how to invite other kids to play. Their posters included questions like “Do you want to join us?” and “Do you want to play with us?” They created two large posters and several other small posters to display around the school.

# Slime for Dog Beds



Kevin Purifory, Terrell Seaines-Taylor, Brett Campbell, and Patrick Kilgarriff

Kevin, Terrell, Brett, and Patrick wanted to create a project involving selling slime to fundraise for pet beds to donate to The Lowell Humane Society. They created a large batch of blue cotton candy slime and customized each jar with different combinations of glitter and beads. To raise more money once their slime sold out, they also created bracelets. In total, they raised \$50 and purchased 10 dog beds.

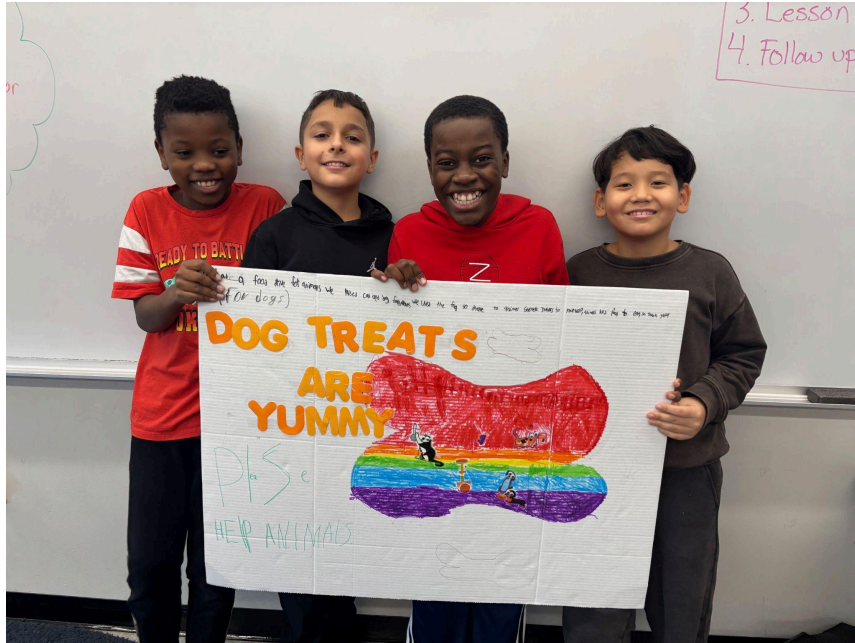
# Kindergarten Helpers



Chevonie McKnight, Chevonique McKnight, Yasmine Elhasany, Ella Sharpe, and Mia Cobanovic

This group wanted to continue a CCSR project that they started last year. Each student chose a kindergarten class to support during morning meeting time every Friday. They created flashcards and games to teach the ABCs, sight words, phonics sounds, and numbers. They also helped students transition into the classroom by carrying their breakfasts and taking off their coats and backpacks.

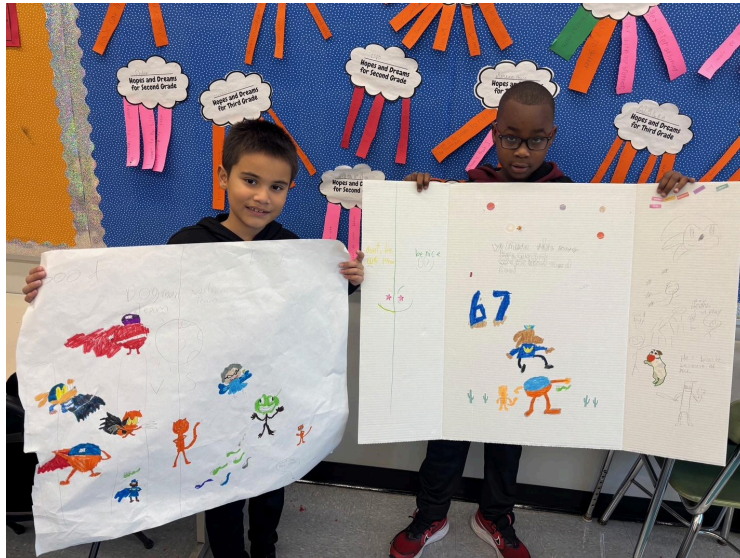
# Help Animals Pet Food Donation



Malachi Connaught, Samuel Diligent, Eduardo Oliva Mercado, Liam Benaoui, Declan Shaughnessy, and Alnur Sembek

This group wanted to collect cat and dog food to donate to The Lowell Humane Society. The students created large and small posters to advertise the donation project. For two months, a donation bin was placed outside the music room, and teachers and students made frequent donations. In total, the group collected 54 pet food-related items to donate to The Lowell Humane Society.

# Dogman Kindness Posters



Alejandro Gantiva and Marc Odvil

These students wanted to make posters to spread kindness and take a stand against bullying, using characters from their favorite book series, Dogman by Dav Pilkey. They thought that if they used characters that other kids like, their message of kindness and anti-bullying would be more effective. They created two large posters and several mini posters to display around the school. Their biggest poster was displayed outside the library at McGlynn Elementary School.

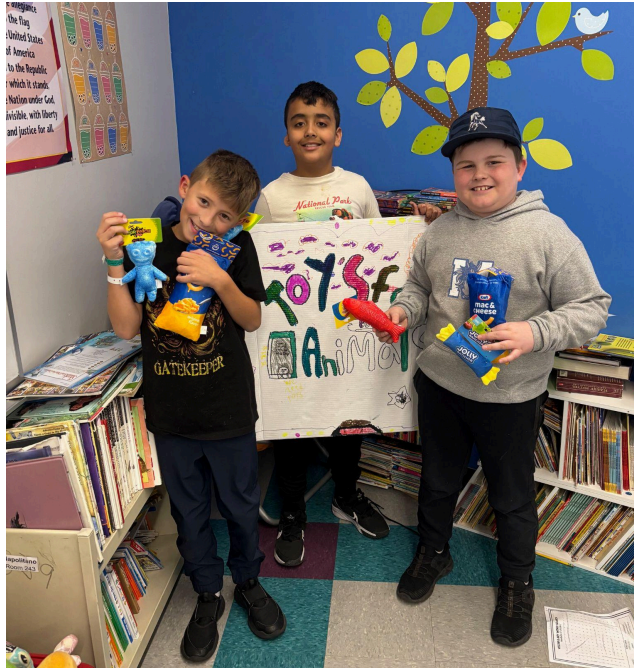
# Slime for Kids



Izabella Camacho and Laura Siqueira

Izabella and Laura wanted to create a project that would help kids with cancer. They made pink cotton candy slime with rainbow foam balls. The students sold 30 jars of slime and raised \$60. They completely sold out after only 3 days, so they decided to make bracelets to sell and raised an additional \$20. In total, Izabella and Laura raised \$80 and chose to donate to support kids at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

# Slime for Dog Toys



Christopher DeRosa, Bennett Dyda, Davi Lucas Schofer, and  
Harry Richard

This group partnered with the whole Spring 2026 CCSR group to participate in a giant slime fundraiser. They made blue foam mini slimes and sold them in 2 jars for \$1. They raised \$22 for their group. They decided to purchase 22 dog toys to donate to the Lowell Humane Society.

## Handmade Pet Toys



Gemma Dileone, Nooreen Hachemi, Jacob Mathews, and Evangelina Tapia

Gemma, Nooreen, Jacob, and Evangelina decided to do two mini projects for CCSR. First, they joined a CCSR group fundraiser to make and sell slime at school. They made pink glitter slime with add-ins of beads and charms. Their group used the \$22 from the group fundraiser to purchase 22 pet toys for donation to the Lowell Humane Society. For their second project, they also found materials at home to hand-make pet toys. They researched how to tie different types of knots and hand sew fabric to make cat toys. As of April 2026, these students continue to hand-make toys and will donate them at the end of the school year.

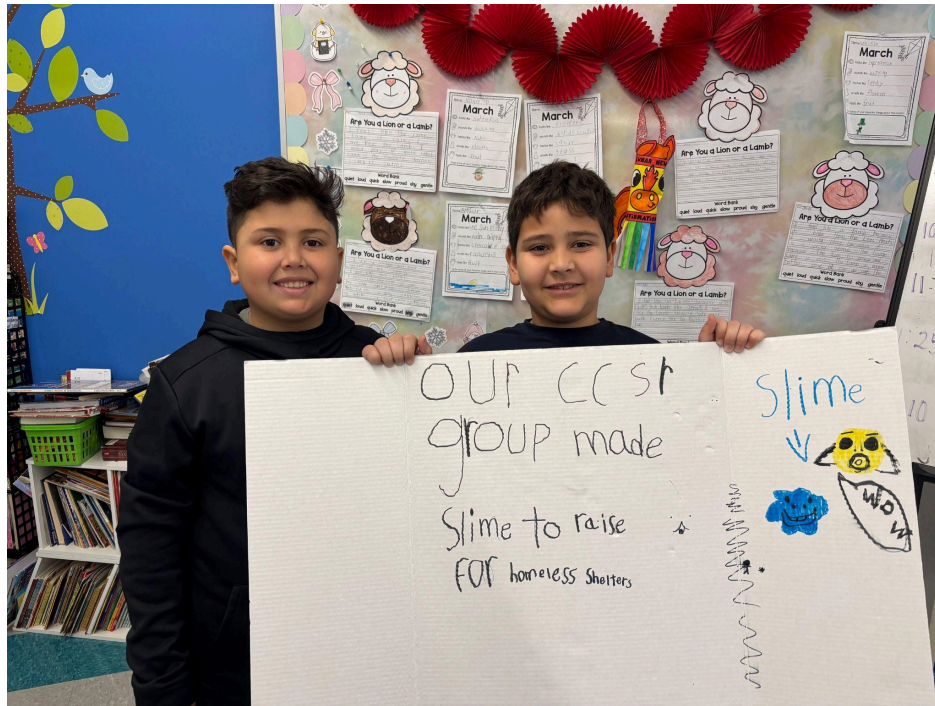
# Comfort Baskets



Feyza Baskin, Lucy Camuso, Katherine Kilgarriff, Victoria Mosiyenko, and Joyce Sena

This group of students took on many different projects this spring. First, they made pink and orange glitter slimes as part of a whole group CCSR fundraiser. With their \$22 from the fundraiser, they chose to purchase materials to make lip glosses and order invisible ink pens. This group purchased additional lip balms and glosses with their own money to sell them and make even more. They sold invisible-ink pens and lip products before school and during lunch, raising over \$240. With their funds, they ordered even more invisible ink pens for additional fundraising, raising \$188 more, for a total of \$428 raised. They have made 6 baskets, and their project is still ongoing. They are considering donating their baskets to the Medford Family Network.

# Slime to Help Homelessness



Amadeo Bonilla and Jose Pedro

Amadeo and Jose were interested in creating a project that would help children affected by homelessness in their community. They participated in a CCSR group fundraiser that created around 200 mini jars of slime. Slime was sold at 2 for \$1, and this group took  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the total \$88 of profit. They donated their \$22 to St. Mary's Center for Women & Children in Dorchester, MA. Amadeo chose this center to donate to because his contribution would help provide resources to up to 500 mothers and children in the Boston area.



# Missituck Elementary School

Advisor: Connor Hemdal

## SNAP Benefits Food Drive



Simon Parks, Addie Strassfeld, Bea Strassfeld, and Ruby Hertzberg, Hugo Hertzberg

CCSR students Addie, Simon, Bea, Ruby, and Hugo wanted to help community members struggling due to the loss of SNAP benefits. The students wrote letters to local businesses seeking donations for families in need. The students also created and maintained donation bins throughout the school and community. Through their hard work, they were able to donate over 500 items to the Missituk community and Medford families who received items from the Food Cupboard of the UU Church of Medford.

## Water Bottle Drive & VFW Movie Night



Vera Siddons and Noelle O'Toole

CCSR students Vera and Noelle noticed that not all students at our school had reusable water bottles. They planned to acquire and distribute new water bottles to all students at the Missituk School. They ensured that every student received a water bottle. These students also wanted to raise money to help veterans in the community. They held a candy-and-popcorn sale at one of the Missituk movie nights. Through their efforts, they raised \$106 for the Medford chapter of the VFW.

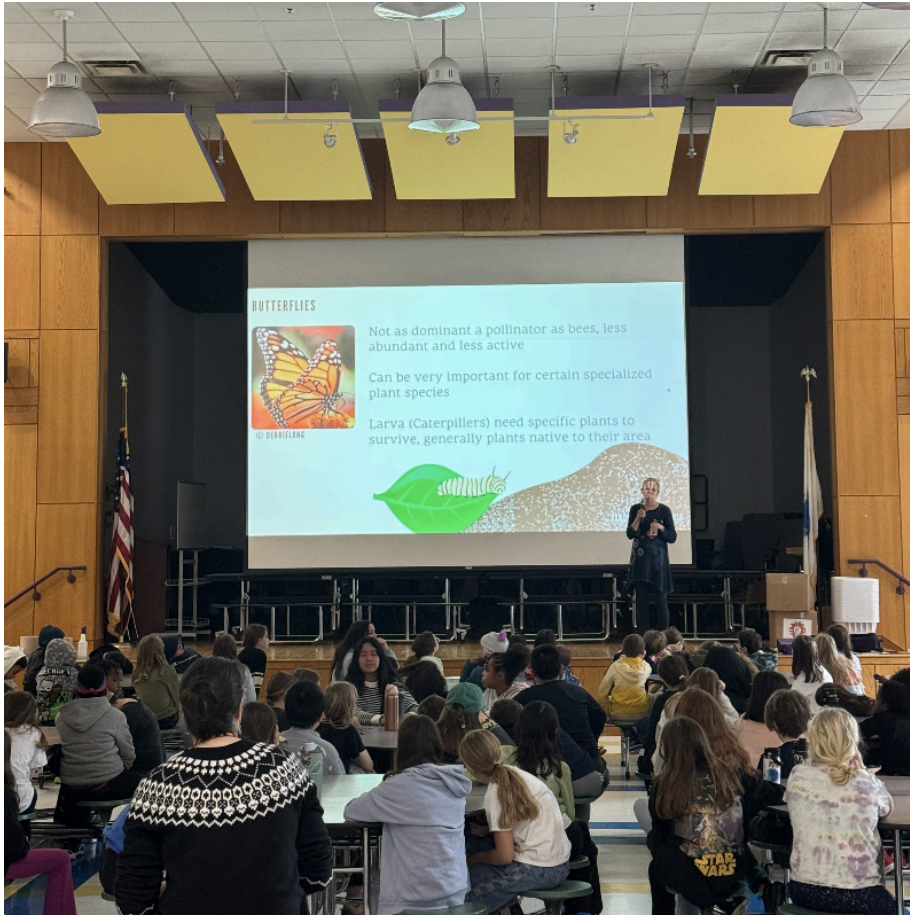
## Craft Sale for Animals!



Jocelyn Simcox, Magnolia Fishbein, Val McGorty, Lillian  
Blauch, Maggie Gideonse, Nora Willworth

CCSR students Jocelyn, Magnolia, Val, Lillian, Maggie, and Nora wanted to help animals in the area that did not have homes. They created homemade crafts and sold them at the Missituk Maker's Market. Together, they raised \$134 for the Animal Rescue League of Boston.

# The Dangers of Black Swallow Wort



Yasmina, Neriah, and Amy

CCSR students Yasmina, Neriah, and Amy were interested in educating the school about the invasive species black swallow wort. They reached out to a professor at Tufts who specializes in pollinators. The group of girls found a time for Dr. Amy Mertl to come in and give a presentation about how to help your garden from invasive weeds and support butterflies. The fourth and fifth-grade students were also able to create seed balls that can be planted to create their own pollinator garden.

# Bird Feeder



Adelaide Erb, Margot Neary, Noelle O'Toole,  
Vera Siddons, Jocelyn Simcox

The girls in the spring session love birds. They noticed that the Missituk outdoor space had trees and thought it would be great to install a few birdhouses there. Through the project, they learned building skills such as following instructions, safely using a screwdriver, and understanding how hinges work. The girls received permission to hang the birdhouses in the garden. With their help, the birds of the Missituk will have homes for years to come!

## For the Kids and For Diabetes



Lillian Blauch, Magnolia Fishbein, Maggie Gideonse, Valentina McGorty, Nora Willworth

The girls wanted to raise money for families with children in need of financial assistance. They were also interested in helping families who were currently fighting cancer. The girls researched and found the *Ellie Fund* and *For the Children*. They baked goods and, with donations from staff, sold them at Missituk Bingo Night. The girls raised a little more than \$250 which was then split between the two organizations.

# Clean Up Crew



Maggie Blouin and Neriah Nascimento

Maggie and Neriah noticed that there has been more litter in Medford recently. They researched and created a flyer about the importance of cleaning up after yourself and the effects of littering. The girls then planned a lemonade stand where they would hand out their flyer while serving tasty lemonade (to be held in early June). The girls will donate all proceeds from the stand to an organization focused on conservation and going green. (They are still deciding which organization).

## Bake Sale for Animals!



Ella, Margot, Daisy, Raheel

CCSR students Ella, Margot, Daisy, and Raheel wanted to help vet clinics in the area. They asked staff members and their grown-ups to help them make baked goods to sell. Through the sale, they raised \$347, which was donated to the Mass Vet Medical Association.



# **Andrews Middle School**

Advisor: Melanie North

# Festival of Trees



Surya R Doshi-Rice, Sofia Eliopoulos, Maxelene Collins

Students collected donations from local businesses, organizations, and families to create a festival of themed trees. They hosted a craft fair in collaboration with 4 Good Vibes to raise funds to stock micro pantries in Medford. Student leaders recognized the need among local families and wanted to ensure they had food. The Festival of Tree Themes included a live book tree, a self-care tree, a book nook tree, an art tree, a Medford Tree (all items were Medford-themed and included gift cards from places around the city), a toy tree, and a home improvement tree. Altogether, the group raised over \$3,600 to help many local families and children.

# Thanksgiving Basket Drive



Leah Berson, Maria LaVeechia, and Kyla Magras

This Thanksgiving, our students wanted to continue to make Thanksgiving baskets for our families in need in the Medford area. Students went above and beyond, securing donations from family and friends, as well as from community businesses. We raised over \$10,000 in funds to purchase food for each basket. Students made 158 complete baskets with all the fixings for a Thanksgiving meal, along with a \$25 gift card to put in each basket for families to purchase a turkey or whatever they choose as the main component of their meal. Fox 25 came to our school to do an entire segment on this project. Students were interviewed about why they did this and how it made them feel. We also had local firefighters come and help out with our cause this year!

# Tree of Warmth



Regan Nitchie, Josie Collins, Jodie Charles  
and Brianna Martino

Students collected donations of warm hats, gloves, scarves, and socks from families to create a large tree of warmth. These items were collected over 3 weeks and then donated to The Medford Family Network for local families in need.

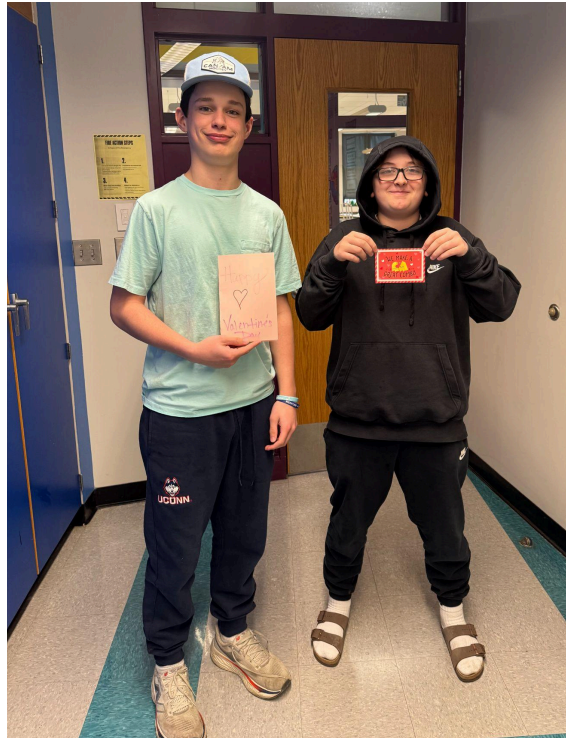
# Holiday Cards for Seniors



Abigail Eskholme, Karley Fisher

Students made several holiday cards for seniors to bring joy to our local elderly community. Each card had a message to enjoy the holiday season and was signed by the students. Cards were delivered to the Medford Senior Center for the elderly.

# Valentine's Day Cards



Connor Meagher and Eric Etinne

Students created several dozen Valentine's Day cards for children and the elderly. Cards were created and dropped off at local nursing homes and Boston Children's Hospital. The goal of the project was that the cards would bring smiles to the faces of those who received them.

## Filling Micro Pantries



Lily Hayes, Gianna Rivieccio, and Payton Morelli

Students raised money to fill micro pantries around the city of Medford. In learning about food security, students wanted to give back to those in our community who needed it most. Medford has many needs, and this was one way to help ensure local families could eat. The students used food donations from the Thanksgiving Drive to refill the micro pantries around the town.



# McGynn Middle School

Advisor: Grace Turnbull-Barr

# Volunteering at a Food Pantry



Francine Piard and Catherine Millien-Thermile

CCSR students Francine and Catherine volunteered at Greater Somerville Homeless Coalition. The goal was to give back to the community by organizing food donations. Through this experience, the girls developed empathy, teamwork skills, and a better understanding of food insecurity while making a positive impact on others. They helped people fill their bags with groceries and keep the soup kitchen clean.

# Nurse Gift Baskets



Avni Hutchinson, Olivia Lilly, and Frances Sipe

This project was led by a group of 8th-grade girls (Avni, Olivia, and Frankie) who hosted a bake sale along the Medford bike path to raise funds. They also organized a donation drive at their middle school (McGlynn) to collect supplies. The donations were used to create appreciation baskets for nurses at Boston Children's Hospital, thanking them for their dedication and care. Through this project, the girls worked together to support healthcare workers and show gratitude to nurses who make a meaningful difference in the lives of patients and families every day.

# McGynn Middle School Language Mentors



Avni Hutchinson, Olivia Lilly, and Frances Sipe

This project was designed by a group at the McGlynn Middle School. The purpose is to provide valuable insights and guidance to incoming 6th graders about what to expect when they begin their world language studies in middle school. The girls presented an engaging slideshow to the 5th graders. The goal was to give information to ease any anxieties and ensure students feel prepared and excited about learning a new language in middle school!

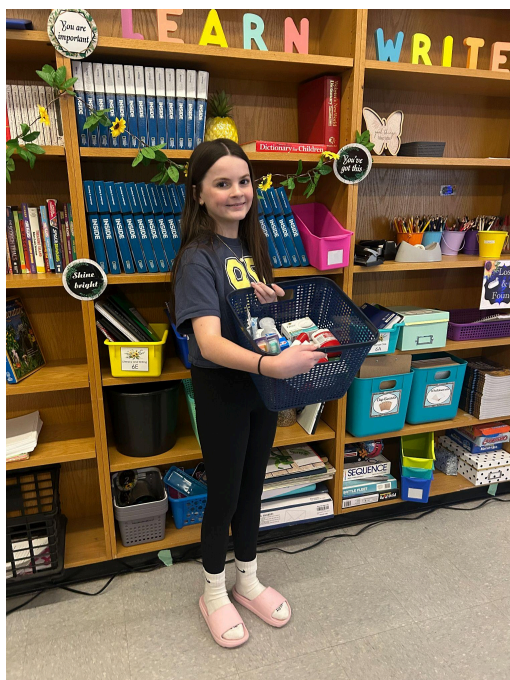
# Carnations Fundraiser



Houria Boudia, Avni Hutchinson, Olivia Lilly, and Frances Sipe

Right before February break, these four girls hosted a carnation fundraiser at school. Their goal was to raise money for future projects, and they thought this would be a fun and meaningful way. Students were able to purchase carnations for their friends, classmates, teachers, or even themselves! The flowers were sold in advance and then delivered during the last period on the Friday before break. The project required extensive planning and mathematical skills. They had to figure out the maximum number of flowers they could buy at the lowest price across various locations.

# Hygiene Drive



Savannah McLaughlin

7th-grade student Savannah McLaughlin organized a hygiene drive at her middle school this spring. As the weather gets warmer, our hallways can get a little smelly. Savannah wanted to support classmates who may not have regular access to basic supplies like soap, toothpaste, and deodorant. By collecting donations from peers and teachers, Savannah helped ensure that everyone has the essentials needed to feel clean, confident, and ready to learn. This effort not only met an immediate need but also strengthened the sense of care and belonging within the school community, showing how small acts of leadership can make a meaningful difference.



# **Medford High School**

Advisor: Jennifer Silva

# Thanksgiving Food Drive



Naimah Pierre-Louis, Chloe Millien-Thermile, Nafiza Janat, Abigail Silva, & Isabelle Fishbein

CCSR Students Naimah, Chloe, Nafiza, Abigail, and Isabelle wanted to help hungry families at Thanksgiving. They contacted the Medford Police Department and partnered to run a food drive that would distribute food to people in need on Thanksgiving. They placed boxes at locations around Medford High School and encouraged classmates, staff, and families to donate canned items, instant potatoes, cranberry sauce, stuffing mix, soup mix, cake and cookie mixes, cleaning items, and paper products. They filled two boxes for donation and delivered them to the Medford Police Department for distribution.

# Spring Food Drive



Connie Luo, Anna Lee, Linh Nguyen

This project was a spring food donation drive formed by three MHS students. The project includes three boxes for food donations, each placed on a different floor outside of the house's principal office. The students decorated the boxes and created flyers and announcements to promote the food drive. Although the food drive is still ongoing, they plan on donating any food received to the American Red Cross Food Pantry. Proceeds from scanning the QR code on the donation flyers will also support the Red Cross and the Greater Boston community.

# School Supply Drive



Emma Beardsley & Gabriel Kennedy

CCSR Students Emma and Gabe wanted to support their teachers and find a way to get school supplies for them so that they would not have to pay for their own classroom essentials. They created a Google form so that high school teachers can request specific items. They shared an Amazon wishlist of items with the community through the high school principal's newsletter and social media. They collected over \$3,000 in school supplies and supported more than 20 high school teachers through this project.



# **Curtis-Tufts High School**

Advisor: Cullen Flynn

# Free Book Exchange at Curtis-Tufts



Kamila Araya, Steevani Charles, Demetrius Paisley-Flango,  
Bendjilove Pierre

CCSR students Kamila, Steevani, Demetrius, and Bendji recognized an opportunity for our school to further expand our community involvement and connections. Recognizing the consistent utilization of our recently installed food pantry, the students elected to create two little free libraries to add alongside it. The students did a fantastic job of sharing responsibilities and supporting each other throughout the brainstorming process. They also obtained excavation approval from the city of Medford and the MA Dig Safe program. The team secured donated books through multiple channels, such as staff, family, and community members.

# Climate Resilience & Watershed



Curtis Tufts Students

The students worked to serve the Mystic River Watershed by protecting biodiversity in urban green spaces and supporting climate resilience in Medford. They planted native plants and veggies in the community garden to support local pollinators. They also removed invasive species and trash from the Mystic River to restore habitat for native plants and reduce erosion along the Riverbanks. They also counted river herring to help the MWRA's efforts to support this keystone species that feeds whales, porpoises, seals, tuna, and cod. The students are currently working to build a mini-forest in Tufts Park using Medford trees to help reduce flooding, lower our heat index, and connect migration routes for at-risk species.

# CCSR Poetry Project Winners



**First Place:** *Horizon of Humanity*  
by Christian Gómez, grade 10

**Second Place:** *To myself: Twenty Years into the Future*  
by Patrick Waldron, grade 10

**Third Place:** *Bullying*  
by Hannah Nambooze, grade 12

# Horizon of Humanity

by Christian Gómez, grade 10

A barren fields drought  
In a meadow once filled with flowers  
Late, too late, stranded here forever  
Life rejects us both.

Dried rivers reveal skeletons, as they  
Grasp towards shoreline  
*Death* remains the victor and humanity  
Softened his fall.

Earth plagued with our ignorance, our souls  
Plagued with inaction. Even as the day deteriorated, We still  
wore our rose-colored glasses

*Even as the Roses starved, and drifted off into the dusted sky*

Their colors fall, and sail, in search  
Of something better, but mankind tore  
Destiny out from their petals, leaving only  
Death to prosper.

Even in this abyss, beauty and life still finds a way. In abandoned  
factories, in fields rotted by war, The Roses still blossom and  
serenade in the wasteland which reaches beyond our horizon's  
shore.

In the absence of humanity, nature's valiance prevails In our loathsome

actions, beauty proves its resilience. Once the tides shift in their favor, our prideful view of ourselves will wash away, and clarity will overwhelm us.

*Our ignorance will no longer be ignorable.*

## **To Myself: Twenty Years into the Future**

by Patrick Waldron, grade 10

Twenty years from now is the time when I will be officially "grown up" A teacher asks me "Where do you see yourself in twenty years?" My mother asks what I want to be when I grow older?

I always hesitate because I don't tell the truth:

I don't see myself in twenty years.

I can't picture myself as a scientist,

or any other profession that people like to flaunt about.

Twenty years from now I can only picture a world with nothing in it no food, no water, no clothes, no life.

The future is very disturbing to think about

It is daunting and unnerving

What is even worse is thinking about what people are doing now. Nothing.

I feel like everyone else has a one-way ticket to twenty years into the future, And I'm not invited.

Am I going crazy or are people taking the future for granted? Worrying about career paths seems like the furthest thing to stress about.

Sure, some people pick up trash, people pass laws, and some people make speeches But too much needs to be done in twenty years, and I just don't think it's possible. To change anything

you'd have to rewrite  
the mindset of more than half the world,  
and no speech, slogan, or rally can do that.

So the world keeps burning,  
People keep polluting,  
Rulers keep rejecting,  
Nothing is changing,  
It feels like we're at the point of no return.

Maybe that's why my mind jumps to the conclusion of death  
instead of thinking about some dumb job.

Maybe that's why I can't imagine living a life,  
Life on a planet that is not livable,  
Twenty years from now.

So I'm sorry for not caring what my wage will be,  
When I can't picture a lifetime long enough to spend it.

# Bullying

By Hannah Namboo, Grade 12

Bullying is like a wound that people can't always see, Words cut deeper  
than a knife, tearing who you're meant to be, Laughing in the hallway,  
whispering words full of pain, One mean joke steals your confidence away.

We never know the slight battles someone fights,

The tears that they hold back, the hurt they try to hide, A smile could be  
beautiful, but it's a destruction from an ugly cry, Bullying can break the  
identity of a person.

So think twice before you act, with kindness leading the way, Love and  
respect can bring joy to someone's day. Standing up for one other,  
spreading the love,

Can change a fate.