

— Winter 2025 —

# Chebeague Island School

*A mid-year newsletter to the Community*



## **A Letter from our Superintendent**

Dear Chebeague Island Community,

Greetings! It has been a wonderful first half of the year at Chebeague Island School! Students and staff have been busy in their classrooms, and we've had some great opportunities to continue our learning around the island and on the mainland this fall. This newsletter will share a few of the highlights!

As we shared earlier in the year, we have welcomed some new students and families to the Chebeague Island School community this year. Our enrollment has grown to sixteen students, four of whom are students from the mainland. These students and families have been wonderful additions to the school! Based on the positive feedback from families about these sustainability efforts, we plan to grow our enrollment to approximately twenty students for the next school year with a few more mainland students. We believe this will allow us to leverage our existing capacity to provide a high quality, enriched learning environment with a variety of social and academic peers for all CIS students.

In addition to our enrollment planning for next year, we have begun the budget development process for 2025-2026. The School Committee reviewed the first draft of the budget at their February 4th meeting and will continue working on it throughout the spring. There will be a workshop with the Selectboard on April 2nd at 5:00pm at the Town Hall if you'd like to learn more! Feel free to join us there or at any of our regular meetings!

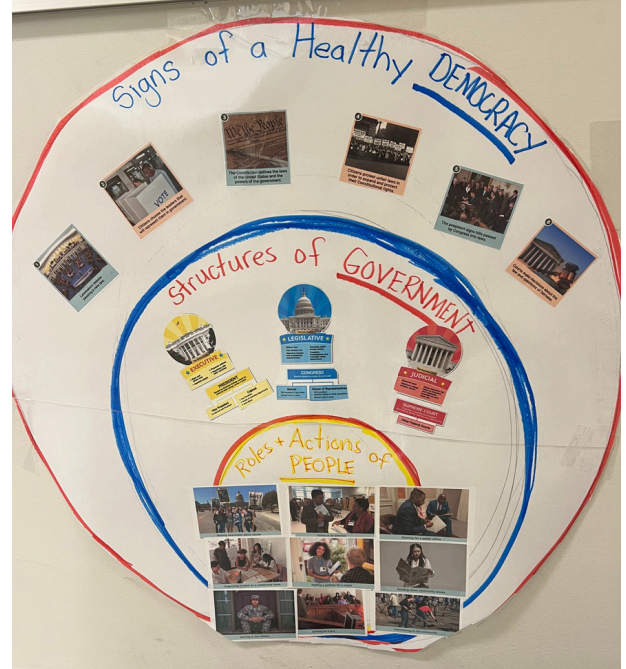
Best  
Aaron Townsend, Superintendent

# Welcome to Woodtown!

By Mary Train, Lead Teacher  
Grades 3-5

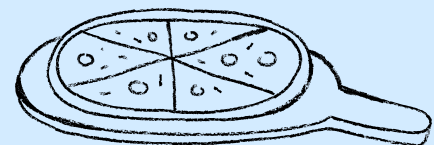
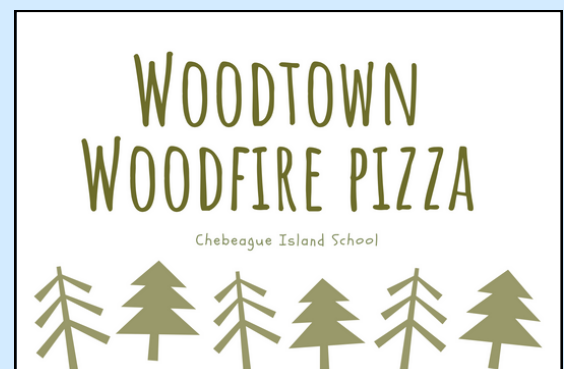
School started in September with a focus on building a learning community as we came back together following summer break and newly welcomed students from the mainland into our school! This year began learning about the United States Constitution and the purpose of our three government branches: Executive, Legislative, Judicial.

Throughout the Fall, we discussed the makings of a healthy democracy, and during that time the students spontaneously began building and making their own democratic community in the woods at school! What began as a creative home building project with natural materials has grown and morphed into a working town with a democratic government that is modeled after our own country's system and includes all three branches of government. Town Meeting are held on Fridays and Elections and new appointments happen monthly.



The newly formed Democratic village of Woodtown, located at Chebeague Island School, is opening their own pizza business! Woodtown Woodfire Pizza will be advertising and selling pizzas cooked in the woodfire pizza oven located at the school!

Keep your eyes peeled or inquire at the school to learn how to order and pizza from our student entrepreneurs for Friday pick-ups! We are excited to combine our basic Economics knowledge with real-world assignments to fill an identified need in the Chebeague Island Community! Look for Woodtown Woodfire Pizza to be open from mid-March until early June!





# A Focus on Connections & Community

By Heidi Donnelly,  
PK-2 Teacher

In Pre-Kindergarten through grade 2 we spend much of our days developing the foundational skills that are the building blocks of learning at school and we spent the first months of the school year studying our role in the school, the rules that we follow to make school a peaceful place and the helpers that we rely on while we are at school.

We were able to make connections to the greater community while visiting Farmer Chuck and harvesting carrots, as well as working in our own school garden with Ms. Jen and Ms. Nancy. We are also lucky to have a connection with the residents of Island Commons and particularly enjoyed playing games, decorating cookies around the dining room table, and creating Valentines together. In addition, we are happy to be getting to the Library each week to spend learning time with Ms. Corie.

On the mainland we have experienced cultural opportunities at the Westbrook Performing Arts Center seeing a musical performance and at Merrill Auditorium for the Nutcracker. We visited the Falmouth Public Library after a visit to the Audubon Center at Gilsland Farm and visited some favorite pizza restaurants when on the mainland.

Our relationship with the Island Institute has continued to grow our understanding of our island community and help us make connections with many of Maine's unbridged islands. We've gathered with students on Cliff Island for a full day event, participated remotely in weekly book groups and yoga with island friends, learned at Gould Academy in Bethel, and connected via Zoom for holiday parties. We have made friends with the children of Cliff, Frenchboro, Monhegan, Isle Au Haut, and the Cranberries.



***"Alone, we can do so little;  
together, we can do so much"***

***-Helen Keller***





# Physical Education

*By Penny Wahlstrom,  
Assistant Teacher, P.E. teacher*

Before the snow came we made the best of it by building a snowman indoors. Teamwork and a dream came true for our students when the snow finally arrived. Building snow forts and snowman is a tradition we love to do. We loaded the bus and headed to the sledding hill on the island. We also had the opportunity to enjoy Sanford's Pond. Students were excited to skate. What amazing views of the ocean and glistening ice at Sanford's Pond. Thank you to the Chebeague Island Community for clearing the ice at Sanford's.



*"We can never have enough  
nature."*

*-Henry David Thoreau*





# Maine Audubon Learning Series

By Jen Doane,  
*Special Education Teacher*

Our students have greatly enjoyed both visiting and hosting the Maine Audubon, where they engage in hands-on learning experiences that connect them to the natural world. Through guided nature walks, they explore the outdoors by listening to bird calls, discovering animal habitats, and creating life drawings. These experiences not only deepen their connection to nature but also inspire them to take an active role in protecting the environment around them!



## Audobon Visits CIS with Maine Owls

During a recent classroom visit from the Maine Audubon, students gained insights into Maine's owls—learning about their unique calls, hunting patterns, and anatomy.





# Special Class Time

Art-Ms. Day

Wellness-Ms. Darcy

Library- Ms. Corie.

Music-Ms.Trace.

Languages & P.E.-Ms. Penny



CIS is incredibly lucky to have so many qualified and committed specialists to teach our students throughout the week in enriching subjects outside the classroom.

Pictures show:

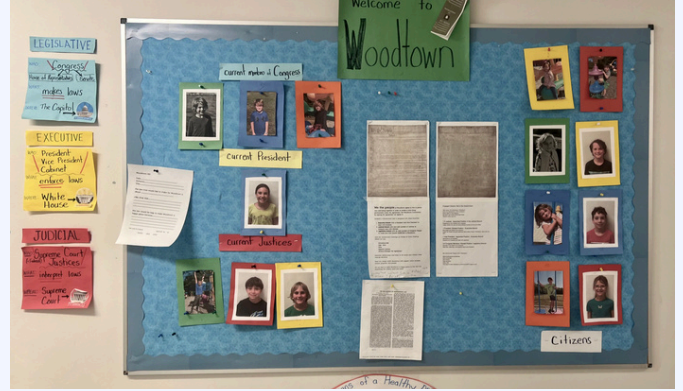
- Selfie art by students
- Winter Concert at the Island Hall
- Library time with Ms. Corie
- Community Service Project making animal toys for the Animal Refuge League during Wellness Class





# Subject Studies Highlights

By Mary Train & Heidi Donnelly  
CIS Classroom Teachers



**Community & United States Constitution + Government**  
**Woodtown Construction and Town Government**  
**Rocks and Minerals + Rock & Mineral Museum Visit**  
**Daughters of the American Revolution Essay Contest**  
**(Isla Werrell-First Place Essay, DAR local chapter)**  
**Force and Motion Projects + Presentations**  
**Gulf of Maine Research Institute-Gulf of Maine Ecosystems**  
**Economics & Woodtown Woodfire Pizza Business**  
**Community Time Buddy Reading**

