



INCLUSION MEANS EVERYONE

YMCA PROJECT CORNERSTONE



Dear Families,

This month in the classroom, we read and discussed the book **Long Shot** by NBA All-Star Chris Paul. This inspiring story shares his journey to become a professional basketball player and how he overcame the obstacle of his height through persistence, hard work, and the support of his family.

Warmly,

Your Project Cornerstone Volunteer

BOOK OF THE MONTH

The book's message is all about "Finding Your Spark!" We used Chris Paul's story to teach students that a "spark" is an interest, dream, or passion that makes them feel excited and happy. We learned that pursuing these sparks, even when facing challenges, builds confidence and a sense of purpose. The lesson emphasized that having a growth mindset—believing you can improve with effort—is key to achieving your own "long shots," or big dreams.

SOCIAL EMOTIONAL SKILLS

Self-Management: Students learned to identify their goals and understand that they have the ability to manage their thoughts and behaviors to achieve them.

Positive Identity: The idea of finding a "spark" helps students develop a sense of purpose and a positive view of their own future.

Planning and Decision-Making: We discussed how to break down a "long shot" goal into smaller, more manageable "small shots" or steps.

Support & Relationships: Students identified their "spark champions"—the caring adults and peers in their lives who offer encouragement and support.

These skills help children build resilience, stay motivated, and feel empowered to face challenges.

AT HOME

You are a vital part of your child's "dream team"! Here are a few ways you can continue the conversation at home:

- **Family "Spark" Hunt:** Ask your child, "What is your 'spark'?" and share one of your own. Discuss what you all love to do and why it makes you feel good.
- **Set a Family "Small Shot":** Choose a small, fun goal to work on together this week, like building a LEGO masterpiece, planting a small plant, or learning a new card game. Talk about the "small shots" or steps you'll take to achieve it.
- **Identify a "Spark Champion":** Ask your child, "Who is a 'spark champion' for you? Who helps you with your dreams?" This helps them recognize and appreciate their support system.

RESOURCES

To keep the conversation about self-acceptance and confidence going, here are some additional books you might enjoy reading together:

- **For K-1:** *The Smart Cookie* by Jory John and Pete Oswald teaches children that intelligence and talent come in many unique forms, encouraging them to embrace their individuality and discover their own special way to shine.
- **For 2-3:** *Brianosaurus* by Ged Adamson explores finding who you are and the many forms of courage, including speaking up for yourself and others.
- **For 4-5:** *Restart* by Gordon Korman teaches children that every day offers a chance for a fresh start, exploring how a character, given a unique opportunity to redefine himself, learns from past mistakes and discovers who he truly wants to be.