

the CURRENT

WINTER 2017

THE MAGAZINE OF CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL

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Looking To Our Future

A 21st Century Space for a 21st Century Education



CHARLES RIVER
SCHOOL

the **CURRENT**

WINTER 2017

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CHARLES RIVER
SCHOOL





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Stand still? Not CRS.

OUR BELOVED SCHOOL was founded in 1911 on a small farm in Needham, along the banks of the Charles River. Several years later, our school moved to its present location; this year marks our 100th anniversary in Dover Center!

As I reflect on the last 100 years, I am overwhelmed by the deep pride I feel for Charles River School. I have tremendous appreciation for the hundreds of faculty, parent volunteers, alumni, and Trustees who — through their great commitment and passion — have enabled our school to provide generations of children with an inspired and joyful educational experience.

Education is not static, and as trends and movements in elementary education have come and gone, Charles River School has not strayed from our mission nor our core values. In keeping with our school's longstanding commitment to academic excellence, our faculty will continue to innovate and invigorate curricula that is in the best interest of each student.

Over the past 100 years, the Charles River School community has thoughtfully evolved our beautiful 16-acre campus, advancing our academic, athletic and social spaces. From renovations to the Community Building including our Learning Commons and Foster Hall, to the Early Childhood Building, to the Activity Center, our campus' growth and evolution is due to the generosity of our donors. Their deep and longstanding commitment to our school, and to supporting the future generations of students that will walk our halls, inspires great hope for CRS's future.

Once again, Charles River School is on the move. As Founders House celebrates 100 years of shepherding thousands of children through their capstone years at CRS, we look to evolve our campus to provide students with a more dynamic space for learning in their middle school years. (You'll read more about the exciting work ahead in this issue.)

A beacon of our past, Founders will always be a vital part of our campus. As we move forward, it's also a reminder of just how far we have come, from that school of just four families on the banks of the Charles River.

Gretchen Larkin



▲ Gretchen Larkin with PreK-2 students Nora Haber, Katherine Plunkett and Jameson Smith



◀ Grandparent Judy Samelson and former CRS science teacher Pam Moor cut the ribbon

Wetlands Lab Opens

ON OCTOBER 22, CRS officially opened the Wetlands Laboratory. The ribbon-cutting ceremony included members of the CRS community, the Dover Conservation Commission, local selectmen, and a representative from the Audubon Society. As the gold ribbon across the entrance was cut, children and adults clad in rainboots eagerly took to the trails to explore.

Situated on three-and-a-half acres of the CRS campus, the Lab includes ADA-compliant nature trails, boardwalks, bridges and platforms for water sampling and viewing. The boardwalks provide an outdoor classroom where students and visitors can explore and interact with the environment without disturbing important habitats.

“Outdoor learning is an important aspect of our curriculum; the Lab will help children learn about our natural world and grow as environmental stewards,” said Gretchen Larkin.

The Lab is intended to be a resource for CRS students, CRCAP campers, and local community groups such as:

- ▶ Public school science classes for wetlands study;
- ▶ Preschools for trails and as a safe, quiet, outdoor space;
- ▶ Boy and Girl Scout troops for troop activities and community service;
- ▶ The Dover Council on Aging for a peaceful and accessible walking area;
- ▶ Local churches for spiritual reflection and fellowship.

“This space will deepen people’s understanding of environmental science, annual changes in the wetlands, and the impact of climate change right here in Dover,” said Annie Kenney, science teacher for Grades 3, 4 and 5. “There are numerous places to sit and journal/sketch or lay on your back and observe the canopy above. It’s an exciting addition to our campus!”

4th Grade Builds Circuits at MIT

AS PART OF CRS's commitment to STEAM and as an extension on their technology curriculum, the fourth graders journeyed to M.I.T.'s Edgerton Center, where they took part in a three-hour class about the concepts of open and closed circuits, and electrical components such as wire, resistors, LEDs, and batteries. Students learned how to cut and strip wire to make electronic connections, and soldered the electrical connections themselves.

By the end of their visit, they had created electronic quiz boards about Ancient Greece, one of the Grade 4 classroom themes. Each quiz board included five multiple choice questions taken from the Ancient Greece board games the students created prior to their trip. In creating their boards, students soldered and wired the components so that when someone touches one "question rod" to one side of the board, and then touches the "answer rod" to the correct answer, the circuit completes and a LED lights up, indicating a correct choice.

This field trip integrated all that students learned at M.I.T. with their classroom thematic curriculum, extending their study of Ancient Greece and making this technology project even more relevant and impactful for these students. 🇬🇷

"This field trip is a great example of how we challenge, increase curiosity, and inspire our students at CRS."

—Teresa Baker, 4th grade teacher



Priya DuBois, Nathan Gomes and Brooke Travis solder parts for their quiz boards

REFLECTION COMMENTS FROM OUR STUDENTS:

"I didn't give up because when I was confused, I would ask questions and try a different strategy."

"I really liked that we got to use a solder tool. Usually teachers do the harder stuff for kids, instead of kids doing it ourselves. The solder was very hot, so we had a bigger responsibility."

"I felt that I learned so much about how to wire and how to make a circuit work."



Students Eva Tutin, Julian Ram-Tylerbest, and Claire Salvin build with pentominoes

Chasing Vermeer

By Rachel Kellar and Rachel Miller,
Grade 5 teachers

FIFTH GRADE BEGINS the year reading and discussing Blue Balliet's novel *Chasing Vermeer*. The tale of two sixth-grade students' quest to solve the mystery of a stolen Vermeer painting serves as a launchpad for the year, allowing us to weave together themes and lessons from a multitude of disciplines.

Chasing Vermeer centers on a set of geometrical shapes known as pentominoes, which are made from 5 squares joined together on their sides. As mathematicians, we begin by studying pentominoes; like the characters in the story, we manipulate them and find hidden patterns. We build on these lessons through our study of codes, emphasizing the importance of using clues to find a solution.

As writers, we treat Blue Balliet's writing as a "mentor text" and try to apply her techniques to our own writing. As art enthusiasts, we study the different artists in the story and their paintings. As historians, we recognize that history can be mysterious; as fifth graders, we emphasize history as detective work, piecing bits of information together, and asking tough questions as we journey through the history of the United States.

This novel enables us, as teachers, to differentiate our instruction and activities so that all students are able to succeed as the story unfolds and they try to find different codes, patterns, and coincidences. The book's many levels and surprises hook the fifth graders from the moment we begin. This year, as we were reading, one student commented, "All of the pieces are really falling into place!" 🌀

Third Grade

Knows Which Way the Wind Blows

By Annie Kenney, Grades 3, 4, 5 Science Teacher & Admissions Associate

MAKING OBSERVATIONS about weather and discussing climate is something children can easily relate to and understand; whether it is clear and sunny or rainy and stormy outside, weather and climate affect their lives every day.

As an extension of their classroom thematic study of Marco Polo's travels, in science class third graders have spent two months tracking weather in Dover, Mass., Venice Italy, and Istanbul, Turkey. Through this study, students have been able to see the changing conditions Marco Polo faced as he traveled the Silk Road, and to better understand the difference between weather and climate.

Students undertook a series of experiments to learn about the properties of air and water. They learned:

- ▶ air responds to temperature change;
- ▶ air exerts pressure;
- ▶ how air pressure and gravity affect water;
- ▶ water pressure increases as the depth of water increases;
- ▶ how temperature affects water's density.

Students built their scientific skills through observation and prediction, and were then able to understand that the interactions among air, land, and water play an important role in weather conditions and climate in areas around the world.

Making homemade weather instruments (Beaufort scales, anemometers, weather vanes, barometers, and cloud charts) allowed them to make tools that meteorologists use, and also understand how those tools work. Students tested their tools and compared their results to the data from the Charles River School weather station, a state-of-the-art system mounted atop the middle school science center, finding that their results with their self-made tools were incredibly accurate! 🌍



Students chart weather in locations around the globe

A Tree Grows in Dover

By Karen Belsley Pratt, PreK/K teacher
and PreK-2 Program Coordinator

JUST A FEW FEET SOUTHWEST of CRS's flagpole grows a Coral Bark Japanese Maple sapling. When PreK-2 children and teachers planted it in early November, the tree still wore a few bright red leaves, hanging onto branches for dear life. Now, there are no leaves left, but the color of the bark is an arresting deep reddish pink. Every few days or so during recess time, children in PreK-2 bring over full watering cans to water the maple so that it will grow. Mysterious other small "trees" have sprung up over the playground, small dead branches planted with care by small children in the mulch, dirt and sand.

Trees are the common denominator for this year's PreK-2 community; both as an important part of Grade 1/2's year-long Native American theme, and as a crucial aspect of our relationship with our natural environment. As a community, we've been exploring many of the things that trees do for us, incorporating into our study concepts from nature, science, literature, environmental responsibility, and health.

Beginning early this fall, students researched trees — taking pictures, creating bark and leaf rubbings, drawing pictures of them, and taking descriptive notes to help them identify each tree.

Our research into trees this fall took us farther afield — first to our new CRS Wetlands Laboratory, and then to Medfield's

Rocky Woods, where students took part in the workshop "Forest and UnbeLEAFable Fun." Students explored the trails and collected a variety of leaves, then identified and tallied the leaves, concluding that Rocky Woods is a predominantly "oak-ey, pine-y forest."

This trip was part of a larger partnership with Rocky Woods and Powisset Farm, members of the Trustees of Reservations. Within this local circle of natural habitats, this year PreK-2 students will explore not just trees, but gain a deeper, hands-on understanding of our natural environment, and our complex relationships with local plants, animals, and farming.

This winter at Rocky Woods, PreK/K will explore the "Forest Food Chain," and students in Grades 1 and 2 will explore winter activities related to their Native American themes in two workshops "Tracks and Figures: Finding Animal Clues" and "Building and Grounds: Woodland Engineering." In the spring, PreK-2 classes will travel to Dover's Powisset Farm to make connections between food, farm and habitat. Students will take part in workshops that will strengthen their understanding of local farm life by exploring composting, farm fieldwork, and the journey "From Nest to Table."

And, of course, we will continue to explore our own campus grounds and the Wetlands Laboratory as well, as these habitats transform with the changing seasons. 🌿



As a community,
we've been exploring
many of the things
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environmental
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and health.



One/Two teacher Jen Worthington with
PreK-2 students at Rocky Woods

Sports

This fall, the CRS Otters had an outstanding season, pushing past their comfort zones to grow both as athletes and teammates. For the first time, the Fourth Grade was allowed to join the cross country team, and lace up their shoes against other schools in the area. The winter season is off to a great start, too, with 6th–8th grade boys and girls competing in basketball and the addition of a Fitness Club.

FIELD HOCKEY

The Field Hockey Team, led by coaches Jen Worthington and Emily Whitten '14, had an awesome season with 3 wins, 1 tie, and 2 losses (3-2-1). Players in Grades 4–8 gained new skills and improved upon existing ones, forged new friendships, and learned how to support each other on the field during both practices and games. Most importantly, tons of fun was had by all! They ended their season with an exciting game against the Faculty that resulted in a 2-2 tie. Special thanks to 8th graders Bella Bodio and Izzy Giuliano for their leadership and flexibility throughout the season.

BOYS SOCCER

The 5/6 Boys Soccer team, led by coach Jordy Hertzberg, came together beautifully this fall, growing as individuals as well as teammates! With the help of two 5th grade girls joining in for most of the games, each of the players really dedicated themselves to the team. It was fantastic to watch the group come together, play competitively, and have a ton of fun.

The 7/8 Boys Soccer team, also led by coach Jordy Hertzberg, showed solid improvement throughout its season with 1 win, 4 ties and 1 loss (1-4-1). Their hard work and perseverance throughout the season paid off with two stellar games in the final week! The games (which included a number of 6th graders) were a true team effort, and it was impressive to watch each individual player step up to support their teammates and work together on a common goal. We wish the 8th grade boys — Max Meyerhardt, Trevor McDonald, Andrew Daniels, Nick Derenzo, Christopher Ethridge, and Philip Spyrou — the best as they move on from CRS.

GIRLS SOCCER

Girls Soccer, led by coach Billy Beauzile, finished with a record 2 wins, 4 losses, and 1 tie (2-4-1). The team focused on fostering a culture committed to enhancing teamwork, self-awareness, building confidence, and most importantly creating a respectful environment so that they, and other students that they competed against, felt comfortable playing. As a whole, the girls' commitment to their sport was exceptional, and they put forth their best effort regardless of which position they played or the outcome of the game. The girls had a very fun and exciting season, and they will continue to build their skills in years to come. Thank you to the 8th graders Caroline Bedikian, Paige Derenzo, Leela DuBois, Caroline Earley, and Charlotte Somol for their leadership.

CROSS COUNTRY

The Cross Country team, led by coaches Kat Whitten and Paul Rupprecht, had a phenomenal second season. The team really took flight this year with the addition of the fourth grade class! The youngest team members were constantly challenging themselves, pushing the veterans on the team to improve and maintain their positions in the scoring. In addition to the strong showings against other schools in the Boston area, CRS won their first-ever home meet against Dedham Country Day, which was held at Powisset Farm. Our eighth graders, Patrick McGucken, Chris MacLean, Austin Qu, and Freddy Clayton led the team with maturity, character, and dedication, and we wish them the best of luck next year!

Girls Soccer takes on
the Fay School



6th grader Hannah Rothstein
with 8th graders Izzy Guiliano
and Isabella Bodio



7th grader
Tommy Hicks
on offense



Building On Our Past

Looking To OUR FUTURE

A 21st Century Space for
a 21st Century Education







AS WE BEGIN 2017, Charles River School ushers in the future of our campus.

Those of us who know CRS know that behind the quiet façade facing Centre Street lies a dynamic, welcoming campus alive with energy. Through the years, our campus has grown well beyond Founders House — incorporating new buildings, additions to Founders, athletic fields, and outdoor spaces for learning, such as our Wetlands Lab.

From lively school dances and turkey dinners, to countless academic lessons, Founders has grown with CRS. If those walls could talk! Over the years, it has been transformed from the original Victorian into the maze-like building that currently houses our middle school.

Today, our 7th and 8th graders are learning in spaces that no longer support the progressive curriculum that our faculty delivers. As we celebrate 100 years on our Dover campus, it is time to create a new, flexible learning space for our middle school students, while preserving the history and charm that is such an integral part of CRS.

The Master Plan

In 2015, CRS completed a Master Campus Plan — a blueprint for optimizing our 16 acres and reorganizing the campus over the next ten years. Just as current students benefit from the generosity of those who supported construction of the Activity Center and Early Childhood Building, generations to come will benefit from these changes in the future.

The star of this plan is a new middle school building, which will replace the addition on Founders and the standalone science building (originally a florist shop). The new building will be home to Grades 6–8, and the middle school science program.

Last winter and spring, we surveyed alumni, past families, current families, faculty and friends of CRS to gain their perspectives on the school's objectives and interest in beginning a campaign. The response was overwhelmingly positive in support of building a new middle school, increasing the endowment and supporting the Annual Fund.

With a clear mandate from the community, the Board of Trustees voted to proceed and CRS embarked on the beginning phase of its newest capital campaign: *Elevate & Celebrate*.

Elevate & Celebrate

The campaign kicked off with a bang. In June, CRS received the largest one-time gift in the school's history — a \$1 million contribution from the Travis family (Joanna and Nigel,

P'19 and P'21) — coupled with a challenge: If the school secured \$7 million in pledges by December 31, the Travis' would invest an additional \$500,000. The response from early donors — including current families, past families, alumni, and friends — was outstanding and CRS met the challenge.

"I am so grateful for these transformative leadership gifts and the groundswell of support they have created. The extraordinary enthusiasm that families have shown for this project and for CRS make me so proud to be part of this remarkable community," said Head of School Gretchen Larkin.

With this momentum, the school is officially embarking on a campaign to make this new building a reality and to strengthen the school's endowment. Over the next 12 months, current families, alumni, and friends of CRS will all be invited to support the campaign.

"At CRS, we take great pride in our innovative curriculum, and our current middle school infrastructure no longer meets our programmatic needs," Larkin continued. "The field of education has evolved at an incredible pace over the last decade; our faculty and students need learning spaces conducive to the project-based, collaborative learning that firmly places CRS at the vanguard of education."

"Seventh and eighth grade at CRS is a 21st century program operating in antiquated spaces, some of which date back to the nineteenth century," said Mary Walsh, upper grades coordinator and 7/8 math teacher. "Current practices require larger classrooms and ample areas for project work, including easy access for projection and room for individual use of technological devices. At CRS, we work collaboratively; a building with open and convenient flow among the various centers of activity will enhance our ability to deliver integrated, meaningful curricula."


The new middle school building will bring together the 6th, 7th, and 8th grades under one roof, as a cohesive middle school program. The design strives to strike a balance between retaining a historically contextual face toward Centre Street, while presenting a more modern face toward the school.

"What's amazing about this project is that the 'quiet phase' of the campaign made tremendous progress in its early stages, exceeding initial expectations in a time period unprecedented in

CRS's history. It's a testament to the community's recognition of the importance of this project, and to the school's leadership and goals," said Carol Lisbon, parent to Amy Lisbon Branton '95 and Emily Lisbon Petersen '98, current grandparent and member of the Campaign Steering Committee.

"CRS students have benefitted from the recognition that ever-improving education needs ever-improving space. The community has always supported this, and whether people's generosity is motivated by their own children reaping the benefits, or 'paying it forward' in recognition of past generosity, stewardship of CRS has always been an exceptional trait among parents and alumni."

The Town of Dover has been supportive of the plans CRS has presented. With efforts led by Trustees and Building Committee co-chairs Jim Blackwell (parent of Sarah '99) and Reg Foster (parent of Frances '12 and Christine '15), the Dover Town Planning Board unanimously approved the school's plans to proceed with construction design, recognizing the improvements the new building will bring to the town's center.

This next phase of our campaign will be instrumental in helping determine our timeline for construction. This campaign has been moving faster than we dreamed possible, and our hope is to keep this momentum going so we can make this teaching space a reality. 



INVESTING IN FUTURE GENERATIONS

Grandparents Judy Samelson and Bill Schawbel and parents Allegra and Eric Lowitt have made an extraordinary leadership-level family pledge of support to Elevate & Celebrate. As grandparents and parents to a 4th grader and 6th grader, the family felt it was important to improve the middle school teaching space and invest in the school's programs and faculty.

Allegra and Eric, what has been your experience as current parents of two CRS students?

"We have two joyful learners in our household! While our children are very different from one another, CRS has cultivated in each of them a powerful sense of curiosity and love of learning. The multi-disciplinary projects challenge them to make connections and bring an incredible depth to their education. For example, our fourth grader just completed his study of Ancient Greece. Not only did he learn to build a circuit board for a game he built about Greece, he also composed and performed a poem in poetry-slam style, and created an event for the class' Ancient Greek Olympics; he's an expert on Ancient Greece because of these rich experiences. Our children are confident and know themselves — we see in each of them the benefit of CRS' commitment to educating the whole child, nurturing them both academically and socially."

Judy and Bill, why is supporting CRS a philanthropic priority for you?

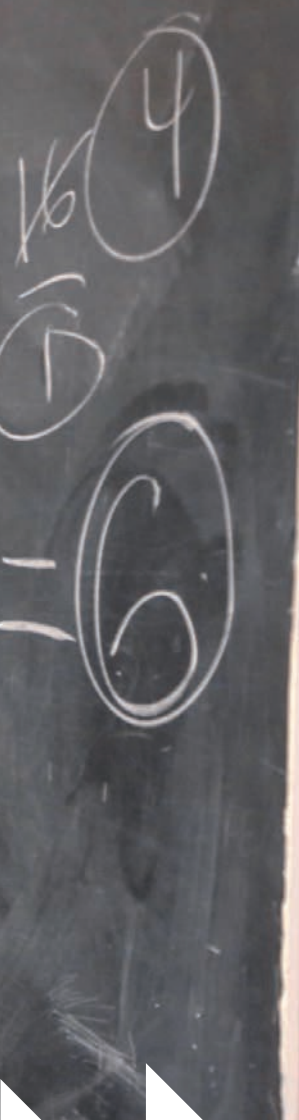
"We give to Charles River School because we believe there is no greater return on investment than that of funding education. The next generation of innovators and leaders must be skilled in finding solutions to the complex global problems that lie ahead. The multi-disciplinary curricula that is integral to a CRS education inspires critical thinking, teamwork, and self-awareness. We are thrilled by the breadth of our grandchildren's experience at CRS; it is gratifying to witness their passion and knowledge when talking about their school work. We are honored to support the outstanding work done at CRS."



Journey Through CRS

Building Blocks for the Future

6th graders
Olivia Bourgault
and Riley Harrison
demonstrate how
they solved
math problems



WHAT DO WE WANT for our children? *Everything.* And so we question everything. Are they learning the right skills? Gaining the right experiences? Are they getting what they need to be successful in life?

These are challenging questions — now, more than ever before. As upper grades coordinator and 7/8 math teacher Mary Walsh said recently, “The current state of exponential change mandates a different kind of education for a future world that is almost impossible to predict or even imagine. In the face of this, what matters most is that kids can think analytically and flexibly, communicate their ideas, work collaboratively, be creative, and find their voices.” In other words, they need the “21st century skills,” identified by CEOs and education experts, alike, as the keys to success in the emerging global community.

These skills have been at the heart of Charles River School’s educational program for more than a century. As a result, our graduates set off into the world confident not just in their academic skills, but with an incredible sense of self — as learners, leaders, and young people — prepared for whatever the future may hold.

Whether it’s through dissecting sheep’s brains or building robots, from the earliest grades CRS students explore the world, express themselves, and experiment with problem-solving strategies. Through hands-on projects, group discussions, and daily reflections, our students lay the groundwork for a lifetime of learning.



PreK/K students
Caleb Ginsberg
and Erin Grimm
listen to a story

Early Childhood

For example, in PreK/K, the world of literature and storytelling is not just a place to build core literacy skills, but also a vehicle for empowering young voices. Each Friday, children take turns dictating original stories to the class. With complete creative permission, these nascent writers explore story-telling on their own terms. Some children opt for more personal experiences: “*I said, ‘Help, Mama! There’s a snake on the porch!’ She grabbed it and swung it away.*” Others incorporate favorite characters: “*Once upon a time there was a dog named Scooby Doo and Shaggy, who was a person.*” Whatever the style or theme, planning and telling these stories strengthen the early literacy skills of creating narrative, sequencing ideas, and developing characters, and also instill in the children the desire and confidence to stand up and share their ideas.



Westy Willis acts out the part of a guinea pig in a classmate's story

"As a current senior in high school, it isn't hard to notice the impact that CRS has had on me. Public speaking, writing, and research are just a few of the many things that I learned from CRS that I carried with me to high school. Book reports made me more comfortable with reading, research projects prepared me for the grueling research paper every winter trimester, Sharing Assemblies helped me with public speaking, and the buddy system taught me what it means to be a role model beyond the scope of my two younger brothers. For me, these are some of the things that CRS taught me that have helped the most. Reflecting back, I found a voice at CRS."

—**Kyle Gomes**, senior at Chapel Hill-Chauncy Hall School

Elementary

Studying history is about more than learning dates and facts; true understanding comes from considering multiple perspectives, and the aggregate impact of political, economic, geographic and social contexts.

The fifth grade study of immigration develops these skills, while simultaneously cultivating critical thinking and empathy so central to a CRS education. Students spend weeks strengthening their research skills through collecting information on four groups that emigrated to the United States through Ellis Island: Italy, Ireland, Germany and the Jews from Russia. Students create a fictitious character and write a journal in the voice of their imaginary protagonist; students convert all of their factual research into historical fiction, tracking their character's journey from the old country to America. Their written work comes to life as they take on their character's role for an Ellis Island simulation, in which they undergo document checks and medical, mental, and legal inspections before visiting the immigrant aid station to locate friends and family already living in the U.S.

This dynamic experience fosters both academic skills and, perhaps even more importantly, the chance to understand history through both factual accounts

and personal experiences. Students gain the ability to recognize that there is much more to any issue or event than just what is captured in headlines.

Middle School

From PreK through 8th grade, CRS students learn to assess and synthesize information and apply it in service of big ideas. For example, in 8th grade, students take on the roles of defense and prosecution teams, as they simulate a trial. Students evaluate the given facts and build their arguments around those deemed most relevant under the 'rules of evidence' in order to prove their case.

This experience creates the opportunity for students to consider "both sides of the story" and understand that in legal cases, just as in real life, a set of "facts" or issues are not necessarily black and white, but filled with nuances and many shades of gray. Considering the facts from an opposing viewpoint will better enable students to advocate for their own position. Rich, hands-on curricular experiences like this one prepare our graduates to consider issues from all sides, and give voice to analysis based on critical thought.

While "facts" are nuanced in the mock trial project, middle school mathematics might seem to be a subject that can remain a rigid discipline, in which success depends solely on memorizing number facts and algorithms. However, this is simply not the case. True mathematical understanding is based in hands-on experiences like those found throughout the early and middle elementary years at CRS. From manipulatives to mathematical principles applied to projects, students gain a strong concept of number sense and quantitative relations, and understand that math is about problem-solving, not just computation.

This problem-solving approach becomes the cornerstone of mathematical instruction in the middle school. In sixth grade, students begin each math class with the "Problem of the Day" (a practice that begins in fifth grade and continues on through eighth grade). After tackling

the problem independently, those who arrive at the correct answer offer guidance to their peers. Next, one student explains to the class their approach to solving the problem. Instead of reinforcing the one “right” strategy, students spend time discussing the variety of techniques that could be used to solve that same problem.

In this way, math becomes a dynamic exercise in critical and creative thinking, collaboration, and communication. Students cultivate patience, objectivity, flexibility, imagination and conversation. These skills are central to the innovation of so many industries and fields of science; today’s students will not be equipped for success if they learn facts and formulas in isolation from true mathematical thinking.

What do we want for our children? Once again, we return to the words of Mary Walsh: “An interesting profile of CRS kids emerges: they are at once precociously confident and charmingly down to earth. Their roots grow deep, making them uniquely prepared for whatever comes their way once they leave us. In short, they ‘know themselves, understand others, and shape the future of our diverse world with confidence and compassion. There is no better gift you can give your child.”

Their journey through CRS is an important beginning to whichever path they choose. 🐶

One/Two student Liam Kerr captures a story from his weekend in his journal



“As parents, we all want what is best for our children; for us, sending our three boys to Charles River School was one of the best decisions we’ve made. We found CRS to be a unique educational setting which cultivates high academic standards and encourages independent learning and critical thinking, stimulates intellectual curiosity, nurtures personal growth, and inspires passion for lifelong learning in a safe community.

Our boys have grown confident in who they are as individuals — participating in class discussions, presentations, and assemblies. They learned to cherish common ground, respect differences, and articulate their points of view. In high school, they often enrich classroom discussions by providing different voices and perspectives on issues affecting our society. In many instances I have watched Kyle, and now Dylan, become facilitators of conversations where they are able to discuss serious and controversial issues in a non-threatening way. This passion and confidence all began at CRS because the school encourages and stimulates critical thinking, respect, and compassion.

In so many aspects, consciously and unconsciously, CRS provided our three boys with a solid foundation, passion for learning, and the wings to fly beyond the walls of CRS. Our high school sons are mature and are prepared to take on any challenges — whether it is writing, research, time management, or advocating for themselves when they need help. The CRS curriculum prepares and challenges students to think critically and out-of-the-box in a compassionate environment, and that allows students to flourish.”

—Joao and Olga Gomes

Kyle, Dylan and Nathan Gomes



Community Events

**It's been a fun-filled fall and winter
for the CRS community!**

Events have included the Fair; a festive cocktail party at Bill and Gretchen Larkin's home for parents and faculty; a celebration of Mary Walsh's 25 years at CRS; the Young Alumni party; and, of course, Winter Festival!



CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION /
Grade 5 co-teachers Rachel Miller and Rachel Kellar
and former faculty member Dibby Moder look through
the memory book compiled for Mary Walsh



CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION /
Mary Walsh at her 25th anniversary celebration



YOUNG ALUMNI PARTY / Members of the Class of 2016: Ryan Eysie, Charlie Marconi, Nate Whitten and Dylan Gomes

COCKTAIL PARTY / Parents Deirdre Levine, Mary Kalamaras, Cindy Mackenzie, and Diane Tutin



COCKTAIL PARTY / Parents Olga Gomes, Rebecca Carley, and Petrena Wood with science teacher Annie Kenney

COCKTAIL PARTY / PE teacher Paula Converse with parents Robin Pedder, Sara Morrison, teacher Kristin Jayne, and parent Yvette Ram





FAIR / 3rd graders Siena Pedder and Mira Haber

FAIR / 5th grade students decked out for the Fair



FAIR / Jessica Thompson Somol '84, Morgan Palmer '45, Head of School Gretchen Larkin, and Aileen Sanger Briggs '60





FAIR / Faculty members Julie Weeden and Chris Raskin with Christopher Chen '15 and Michael Donahue '15

FAIR / Donuts on a string are always a big hit!



Winter Festival: The Tradition Continues!

ON FRIDAY, DECEMBER 16, the CRS community came together to continue the joyous and longstanding tradition of Winter Festival. Each grade shared a song or presentation inspired by their classroom theme and the many holidays celebrated around the world this time of year.

This year, Winter Festival included the PreK/K students performing their self-composed song “Otternauts in Space,” an a cappella performance of “Can’t Stop the Feeling” by seventh and eighth grades; Grades One/Two shared the traditional Navaho prayer “Now I Walk in Beauty” and the Ojibwe lullaby “Hey Hey Watanay;” and Grade 5 performed the Flamborough Sword Dance. Foster Hall resonated with the Chorus performance of “Winter Wonderland-ish!”

CRS has celebrated Winter Festival for more than 50 years; the Festival celebrates the season and brings to life the diversity of traditions within the CRS community. 🍩



PreK/Kindergarten students perform “Otternauts in Space”

“Winter Festival is a beloved CRS tradition. The enthusiasm and sense of community is incredible when we have so many family and friends gathered together for this joyous occasion!”

—**Gretchen Larkin**, Head of School

Jordy Hertzberg, co-teacher for Grades 1 & 2

By Kat Whitten, Director of Admissions

IN HIS SEVEN YEARS at Charles River, Jordy Hertzberg has taught 4th, 2nd and 1st graders, coached multiple sports, and infused his sense of humor and profound respect for young people into each of his roles. When asked about working with different ages, Jordy is quick to say that he appreciates them all, and is particularly enjoying the multiage 1st and 2nd grade classroom “because there is so much room for imagination with this group.”

Creativity and imagination are words that come up when Jordy’s students and colleagues talk about him, as well. Co-teacher Theresa Leone described how, in order to encourage students to use more interesting and sophisticated verbs, Jordy held funerals for “got” and “went,” which included some final words of respect from Jordy and many of the students in attendance. Following the services, the words were relegated to “The Bland & Overused Word Graveyard” that he created on the wall, a memorable visual reminder to students to broaden their vocabulary!

The collaboration between members of a teaching team is an aspect of his job that Jordy relishes, allowing educators to learn from one another and to create a unique classroom environment. Jordy cites the ability to be ambitious with the curriculum and to try large-scale projects as a high point of co-teaching. At the same time, this model also provides opportunities for autonomy, such as in the small language arts groups in Grades 1 and 2.

Jordy’s students note that he likes to joke around, loves to talk about his young daughter, and finds ways to make almost anything fun. Last year, for example, when students in his language arts group were having a hard time listening and following the class Community Agreement, Jordy created something called the Bean Team. First, he and his students created a special Community Agreement just for their language arts group. Each student then received five pinto beans at the start of



each class; when a student broke one of their rules, that student forfeited a bean. At the end of the class period, the remaining beans were dropped into the Jar of Awesomeness. Once the jar was filled, the class earned a Day of Awesome, which featured a special activity in the ECB Collaboratory (CRS’s Maker Space) related to the book the class was studying. Students remember that this approach “got us to listen and to pay attention more,” and that they were excited to try to fill the jar more each day.

While students know Mr. Hertzberg likes to laugh and make jokes with them, they also understand that he takes the student-teacher relationship seriously. “I aim to bring mutual respect into every interaction with a student,” Jordy says. It is of paramount importance to him that his students know that he sees them as valued and valuable individuals, a hallmark of the CRS approach. 🌱

Ben Powell '84: Making An Impact, One Company at a Time

BEN POWELL has spent his career creating change. As founder and CEO of Agora Partnerships, he leads a non-profit that supports entrepreneurs whose businesses address social and environmental challenges in Latin America, with particular focus on ethical fashion, sustainable agriculture, clean energy, and women's health. Through his company's program, these entrepreneurs gain access to the knowledge, networks and capital they need to succeed. Fifty companies will go through the program this year.

While Ben attended CRS only for 7th and 8th grades, he still has close ties to his classmates and the school. "At CRS, I was able to be myself — kind of a prankster and jester — and feel comfortable during a very awkward stage of adolescence. I remember gaining a lot of confidence during that time. CRS was a safe place where you could wonder, be curious, and laugh a lot; that opens you up to new possibilities.

"Coming to CRS from a very rigid and structured school, I loved the sense of community, and the interest people had in discussing and learning. Community is important and shouldn't be taken for granted; I've brought this belief in community into Agora."

Agora looks for four core values in its employees and the entrepreneurs it supports, and Ben believes they're important for kids to have today: empathy, agency (sense of confidence), curiosity and perseverance. The combination of empathy and agency is powerful because it combines caring about something with the mindset that you can make a real difference. Curiosity is important because asking the right questions is central to success. And we value perseverance because it's important to enjoy the work; everything will not come easily, so you should do something you love.

What is Ben's advice for current CRS students? If you're interested in social entrepreneurship — and how to create change — become experts on Benjamin Franklin. He's an incredible example of a person who lived a successful, fulfilling life in service to others, while still having a lot of fun. And, if you're interested in entrepreneurship, learn coding.

Ben is passionate about evolving our capital market so we can support innovative ideas that create public good, not just private gain. He earned a BA with high honors from Haverford College, a MBA from Columbia University, where he was awarded the inaugural alumni social innovation award, and a MSFS with distinction from Georgetown University. Ben has been named a Draper Richards Kaplan Foundation



Entrepreneur, a BMW Foundation Young Leader, and an Ashoka Fellow. He was a Social Venture Network Innovation Award honoree in 2009 and named one of 2010's top 40 under 40 development leaders in Washington, DC. Ben lives in Washington, DC and enjoys tennis, theater, and talking politics with his wife and three children. [@benpowell](#)

Young Alumni Continue to Impress

Lily Hicks, Class of 2014

By Rachael Burbank, Assistant Director of Development

IN THE SECOND YEAR of the Young Alumni Awards, nominations continued to impress the Alumni Council. These young alumni, who graduated between 2012–2016, have been engaged with community service, proved their leadership among peers, and earned high GPAs, maintaining their love of learning. The Alumni Council recognized Lily Hicks '14 with this year's award for her leadership and poise.

Following her graduation from CRS, Lily attended Phillips Exeter Academy for two years. During her time there, she was invited to represent the school at the National Student Leadership Conference, and also participated in a program at Yale Law School, where she received the Best Mock Trial Lawyer Award.

At Exeter, Lily also worked as a volunteer tutor in the center for grammar and writing, which was a natural extension to her involvement at *The Exonian*, the school's weekly newspaper. As the *Boston Globe* Spotlight Team published its provocative series on sexual misconduct at boarding schools, Lily was chosen to cover the sexual misconduct articles for *The Exonian*.

Last fall, Lily transferred to Noble and Greenough School, where she continues to thrive. She is involved with a community service tutoring program for 6th graders, some of whom speak English as a second language, to help them prepare for entrance exams for charter and private schools.

In addition to her community service, Lily is a member of the Young Democrats, Young Republicans, and Students for Gender Awareness, which focuses on feminism. She rides horses competitively and is active on the ski team. This summer, she plans to volunteer in the Youth Court program, where she'll work in a courtroom environment with offending youth.

"I'm honored to have been given this year's Young Alumni award. I am very grateful for the love of learning that Charles River instilled in me from a young age, and look forward to serving as part of the Alumni Council moving forward. A childhood at Charles River is the greatest gift a parent could give to their child; the world would be a much kinder, more thoughtful, more curious place if everybody learned the skills that even the youngest CRS students have been taught," said Lily.

The Alumni Council was honored to present the Young Alumni Award to Lily during the Young Alumni Event in November. Please consider submitting a nomination for the 2017 Award. All alumni from the Classes of 2013–2017 are eligible. Nominations are considered for two years. 🐾

Alumni Council co-chairs Emaline Surgenor '05 and Sam Olsen '04 present Lily Hicks '14 (center) with the Young Alumni Award



**2016 YOUNG ALUMNI AWARD
NOMINEES INCLUDED:**

Isabelle Bastian '13
Ryan Bodio '13
Sophia Brescia '13
Kyle Gomes '13
Caitlin Reardon '12
Matthew Ward '12
Emily Whitten '14
Madison Williams '13
Wes Diaz '12

"A childhood at Charles River is the greatest gift a parent could give to their child; the world would be a much kinder, more thoughtful, more curious place if everybody learned the skills that even the youngest CRS students have been taught."

—Lily Hicks '14

Class of 1978 Reunion with former faculty member Toby Dewey '62, Louisa Marshall, George Nichols, Malcolm Leach, Belle Hunnewell Stafford, Rupert Thompson, Wendy Grannis Page, Meg King-McFarland, Antonie Chute and Shappy Donnelly

Alison Campbell '83 had dinner with former CRS faculty members Toni Chute and Anne Jackson in January



Members from Class of 2013 got together for a reunion during Thanksgiving break at Pinkberry in Wellesley

Mini reunion for the Class of 2004 at Gillette Stadium this November including Alexi Sacco, Nikhil Malik, Sam Olsen, Jonah Ruddy, Jon Greco and Reed Austin



Sophie Ridlon '15, Spanish teacher Kent Rouillard and Steffi Joe '16

Teresa Baker, Ryan Phelps '13, Carol Ahearn, and Desi Doulos-Ayers





◀ Victoria Prete '01 and mother Sokha after her white coat ceremony at UMASS

Alumni News

1950s

BARBARA RUSSELL WILLIAMS '54 is living in Bellevue, Washington with her husband Steve, where they like to hike the trails and canoe on lakes to both the east and west of their home. Barbara is a docent at the Bellevue Botanical Gardens and Steve guides hikes on the Issaquah Trails Club among other volunteer posts. Their son lives nearly with his wife, and their daughter lives in Arizona with her family.

1970s

ERIC COLE '77 is living in Marblehead and has been working at Fidelity Investments for the last four years. He also recently started a company called Interview IQ which provides career counseling and interview coaching to soon-to-be and recently graduated college students. ■ **WENDY GRANNIS PAGE '78** had a fantastic time in November reconnecting with her 5th and 6th grade classmates after 40 years. Wendy is living in Concord, Mass.

with her husband and two sons, Benji and Willie. ■ **ISABELLE HUNNEWELL STAFFORD '78** lives in Tamworth, NH and has two children, Thomas (age 17) and Georgia (age 15). She loved reconnecting with classmates over Thanksgiving and hopes to keep in touch. She is currently the General Manager of The Country Store in Tamworth known as "The Other Store." ■ **REGINA PURTELL '79** loved seeing former sixth grade teacher Carolyn Peirce this fall, even though it was during a sad occasion — the memorial service for CRS past parent Whitney Robbins.

1980s

ZANDER SPRAGUE '82 recently passed the Professional Clinical Counseling Law and Ethics exam. ■ **COURTENAY CABOT VENTON '87** is an international development economist and recently had an op-ed published with Jan Egeland, Secretary General of the Norwegian Refugee Council and UN Special Adviser on

Syria, on the cost of late response to humanitarian crises. ■ **KATE MASON '89** and husband Chris Hummel welcomed baby girl Georgia Hultgren Hummel on May 23, 2016 and just recently moved to Walpole.

1990s

JEFF RAIDER '95 and his business Harry's Razors were featured on the Today Show in July. This is Raider's second business after he founded Warby Parker, a high-end eyeglass company. ■ **EMILY SCHIFFER '95** hosted an exhibit at Brooklyn Bridge Park in September of her latest photographs and sculptures, which capture how unspoken histories and traumas are passed between generations.

2000s

[1] VICTORIA PRETE '01 was presented with her jacket during the UMASS medical school's white coat ceremony in September. Her mother, Sokha was the one to put the jacket on Vicki during the ceremony.



▲ Colin Reed '90, his wife Elisabeth Frankel Reed and their kids Brandon, Julia and Sarah, Carly Reed '05, Mike Bruno, Katie Reed Bruno '02, and past parents Jessica Reed and David Reed

Abby Chandor '04 and Teresa Baker ▼



Sokha said, “We couldn’t have done it without all the Great Ones at CRS. And I have to add the admissions staff were intrigued by the fact that Vicki had graduated from FIT NYC — they never had someone from the fashion industry apply before!” ■

[2] KATIE REED BRUNO '02 married Mike Bruno on July 23 at the Charles River Museum of Industry and Innovation in Waltham. ■

REBECCA ANNE TELLO '02 worked with a New York-based nonprofit, Helping Hands for the Disabled, to launch a music video aimed to bring awareness for the blind and visually impaired. The video, featuring a reimagined cover of Christina Aguilera’s 2002 hit “Beautiful,” showcases a 64-year old Manhattan resident Lucia Maret, who has been blind since birth; she wanted the video to show people what she could do in the face of an eviction threat. ■

[3] ABBY CHANDOR '04 is working on her master’s degree at Lesley University in Creative Arts Elementary Education and recently interviewed 4th grade teacher Teresa Baker for a research paper. ■

PATRICIA NICOLAS '05 completed her master’s degree in journalism at Emerson College. She worked as a TV news anchor and reporter in Worcester. She recently accepted a new position as a TV news reporter in New York. ■

JONATHAN GRECO '04 recently finished his MBA at Stanford and is now living in Boston. ■

SARA REMSEN '04 is finishing her master’s degree at MIT where she is specializing in the design and development of mixed reality applications. ■

DAVID STANTON '06 created a new app called GymSnap, which lets college students avoid a busy gym, with his high school best friend Joe Rockland.

2010s

GENNY COHEN '13 managed the Buckingham Browne and Nichols football team this fall, which placed first in the ISL and won the O'Keefe NEPSAC Bowl Game. Genny was also assistant stage manager for the fall play "Much Ado About Nothing." She volunteers with Best Buddies, which is an international organization that pairs students and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities with students and adults who do not have IDD. ■

BRADEN JOE '13 is a camera operator for MTV's TruLife. He also has shot footage for a CBS documentary and other independent films. ■ **ISABELLA OLIVA '13** acted in the Dover Sherborn High School Drama Department's "in the round" production of A.R. Gurney's "The Dining Room" as Agent, Nancy, and Meg. She is a regular participant in the DS fall and spring plays and winter musicals. ■ **EMILY WHITTEN '16** was selected to serve on the youth council by State Senator Karen Spilka and spent several days at the State House throughout the year.

Faculty

[4] Nurse **CAROL AHEARN** was a 2016 nominee for the South Shore Visiting Nurse Association's Marjorie S. Bryant Award for Outstanding Patient Service. Carol was nominated for her 31 years working in multiple roles, most recently as a per diem registered nurse for the VNA's First Day Home Care division, and demonstrating respect, innovation, and patience, among other leading strengths. ■ **[5]** Former second grade teacher **ROWENA CHOW** gave birth to baby girl Camilla Rose on December 29. Camilla joins older brothers Connor and Ryan weighing 8 pounds and 7 ounces. Ro moved to California five years ago when her husband Chien's work took them west.



Nurse Carol Ahearn and Makha Kekana '16

Former faculty Rowena Chow welcomed her third baby, Camilla on December 29



Former faculty Barbara Kraemer-Cook
and Gretchen Larkin in California



▲ Fifth grade teacher Rachel Kellar was married on July 9

■ **NANCY HARRIS FROHLICH**, former early childhood faculty member, founded LEAPS of IMAGINATION in 2014. The program and the team of five mentor artists has brought our month-long art and social justice program to more than 250 children in public elementary schools in midcoast Maine. The organization offers five programs a year in communities where art class is 30 minutes a week or less and families facing economic challenges. ■ [6] Fifth grade teacher **RACHEL KELLAR** was married on July 9 at Mohonk Mountain House in New Paltz, New York to Joel Anderson. ■ [7] Former CRS faculty member **BARBARA KRAEMER-COOK** is now the Upper School Head at Marin Country Day. From 2004-2007, Barbara worked at CRS as a learning specialist and as Assistant Head of School.

In Memoriam

The Charles River School community extends its sincere condolences to the following families.

JENNIFER HANKEY BARTLETT '44 passed away in July 2016. ■ **GORDON**

(WASLEY) AUSTIN, beloved wife of alumnus **F. REED AUSTIN JR '65**, passed away on November 28, 2016 in Boston. Born in New York City, she was a graduate of the Pomfret School in Connecticut and furthered her studies by attending Boston University. When her family was growing up, Gordon was a member of the Dover Church and a devoted volunteer at CRS for their children, **KIAMECHE AUSTIN '99**, **KATEY AUSTIN '02**, **F. REED AUSTIN III '04** and **CHAD AUSTIN '05**.

■ **GEORGE SPRAGUE**, father of **CYNTHIA SPRAGUE '86** and **ZANGER SPRAGUE '82**, died peacefully on August 30, 2016 surrounded by family after a short illness. He served on many boards from education institutions to environmental and conservation organizations. He held multiple position in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts including Director of Conservation Services in the Department of Natural Resources. His daughter, **LUCY SPRAGUE '80**, predeceased him in 1996. ■



WHITNEY ROBBINS, mother of **WHITNEY ROBBINS '82**, passed away of acute leukemia on September 25, 2016 surrounded by family. She was a vibrant soul who touched the lives of so many and she leaves a legacy of friendship, community service and quick wit that will never be forgotten. ■ **ELLIS "OLLIE" JONES**, husband to former Head of School **ANNA JONES**, died peacefully on October 25, 2016. For those of you who remember Anna, you will remember Ollie's vibrant personality and care for Charles River School. He valued education. He studied at Yale, Oxford, Columbia, American University, and Suffolk Law School. He believed in peace. As a diplomat he worked to get people to know one another across longstanding lines of conflict, culture, and language. He served twenty one years as a Foreign Service Officer in Turkey, Nigeria, Lebanon, Syria, Iran, Yemen, and Guinea, and as a Professor at the Air Force Academy in Colorado. During the last several years of that time he went to night school and got a law degree. He then passed the bar in Massachusetts. As a banker and lawyer he worked for the Bank of Boston and a handful of small law firms, but mostly he helped family and friends with their legal problems in wills, trusts, and estates, often saving them lots of money in legal fees. But the focus of those years was his dedicated support of Anna's career as an educator. ☺



Aileen Sanger Briggs '60 shares:

“ I support CRS not only because of what the school gave me as a young student, but also because of what I see when I visit today. However, let me start with my experience as a 6-year-old.

If not for the amazing insight and proactiveness of our English Headmistress, Gladys Adshead, I would not be where I am now. The fact that Miss Adshead was English is key to my education, since at that time the English were much further ahead [of the U.S.] in understanding and assisting those with learning disabilities. It became very apparent that I was unhappy when, after only one week of 1st grade, I had physically moved my desk from the front row to the back of the classroom; this did not go unnoticed!

My teacher understood that I was not a happy student and I imagine was relieved when Miss Adshead quickly stepped in. She gently talked with me and even visited me at home, bringing with her a gift — a kaleidoscope. When I picked it up with my right hand and put it to my left eye, she was the first person to make the connection that I had cross-dominance. After further investigation, she also discovered that I was dyslexic. During first grade, she met with me several times each week, working with me so the blending of letters made sense, and the ability to read left to right was a more natural inclination.

CRS was a small school where you mattered. I still see that when I visit today and observe the excitement, enthusiasm, and freewheeling exploration happening — so fabulous at the elementary level. We've come a long way in education, and CRS is a perfect example of that!



Help Us Update Our Database!

It is challenging to keep up with the many exciting changes that occur in the lives of our alumni, past families, former faculty and friends. Our outdated database is being overhauled to better serve you. Although there may be some bumps along the way, we are confident this data scrub will help us promote information about upcoming reunions, share exciting changes to our campus, offer ways to reconnect with CRS, and help bid farewell to retiring faculty.

If you have recently moved, changed your name, were promoted, or added to your family, please reach out to **Rachael Burbank**, Assistant Director of Development, at rburbank@charlesriverschool.org or 508-785-8267.

The *CURRENT* Winter 2017

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Annual Fund

A donation to the CRS Annual Fund demonstrates your commitment to supporting academic excellence, innovation, and the experiential education that CRS provides. All gifts to the Annual Fund enhance the depth and breadth of our curriculum, attract and retain the best faculty, increase financial aid to support a diverse student body, and maintain our beautiful campus. We need your help to reach our fundraising goal by June 30 — please donate today by visiting www.charlesriverschool.org/Page/Support-CRS.

Save the Dates

- **Boston Alumni Event** // Wednesday, April 12
- **May Day/Grand Persons Day** // Friday, May 5
- **Spring Fling** // Friday, May 19
- **Graduation** // Wednesday, June 14
- **CRS Fall Fair & Alumni Lunch**
Saturday, October 21