

# the CURRENT

FALL 2023

THE MAGAZINE OF CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL

[WWW.CHARLESRIVERSCHOOL.ORG](http://WWW.CHARLESRIVERSCHOOL.ORG)

**Welcome  
Gabe Burnstein**  
Charles River School's  
11th Head of School



**CHARLES RIVER  
SCHOOL**

DEEPER UNDERSTANDING, HIGHER ACHIEVEMENT.



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A lifelong educator, Gabe leads with curiosity and a respect for history and traditions.

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### ON THE COVER

Gabe Burnstein joined CRS in July and has spent the past several months getting to know the community, setting the tone on campus, and stepping in to his role as the school's "chief learner."

### CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL MISSION

Charles River School honors the pursuit of academic excellence and the joy of childhood. We nurture each child by igniting curiosity, encouraging creativity, and cultivating intellectual engagement. Our graduates know themselves, understand others, and shape the future of our diverse world with confidence and compassion.

### COMMUNITY EQUITY INCLUSION STATEMENT

**At Charles River School, community, equity, and inclusion are essential elements of our curriculum and community and are central tenets of our Mission Statement.** We are dedicated to our efforts to create a school community in which everyone is welcomed, recognized, and valued both as an individual and as a member of the Charles River School family. Through our culturally responsive teaching practices and the authentic learning experiences we provide for our students inside and outside of the classroom, Charles River School shows a deep dedication to graduating well-rounded students who "know themselves, understand others, and shape the future of our diverse world with confidence and compassion."

We commit ourselves to:

- **Cultivating** intercultural competence and anti-bias mindset and actions through our curriculum and co-curricular work with our student body, our faculty and staff, and our parents and caregivers
- **Deepening** our community's knowledge of and respect for the multi-faceted nature of identity and culture as they exist in ourselves, our local communities, and in our world
- **Providing** a school environment and an education that equips community members with the awareness, attitude, knowledge, and skills to become successful, contributing members of a global society
- **Developing** historical and contemporary understandings of the implications of systemic oppression, power, and privilege and how our work as a school can play an important role in dismantling those systems
- **Engaging** in the complex work of equity, inclusion, and belonging with careful thought, enduring dedication, and ongoing self-reflection

### HEAD OF SCHOOL

Gabe Burnstein

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**CHARLES RIVER**  
SCHOOL



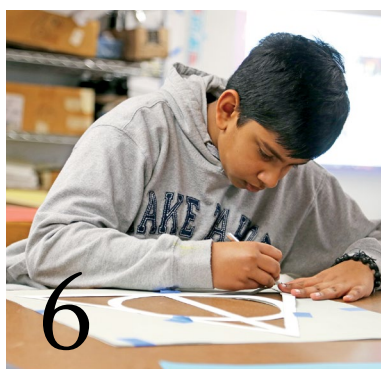


## Our Otters had a busy spring

- 1 Sophia Avila '30 shares her work with visitors on May Day
- 2 Parent Dan Stokes P'23, '25, '29 helps student volunteers prepare meals for Friday Cafe, a Cambridge-based program for unhoused individuals and others living on the margins
- 3 Students on stage for a new enrichment program, Scenes and Songs
- 4 7th graders Leyton McCormick, Jack Inman, and Luke Ramos-Starmer demonstrate their project at the annual Design Expo
- 5 Teacher Nidhi Sharma works with Benji Montani '30 on a stop motion animation project
- 6 Surya Hanumolu '26 hard at work in the art room
- 7 Georgia Hummel '30 participates in a martial arts class
- 8 Maya Engle '26 and classmates perform the traditional May Pole dance
- 9 Visiting artist Joh Camara (center) leads 4th graders in drumming

# SNAPSHOTS

A GLIMPSE OF OUR YEAR TOGETHER





# Everybody In, Nobody Out

**Imagine asking anyone who has ever been in a school about their happiest memories from elementary school or middle school.** Now, I don't know the specifics of what they will say, but I am sure of one thing: every joyful memory will involve other people. The smile they share when telling their story will be accompanied by a memory of a classmate, a teacher, a coach, a parent, or some combination therein. This is not a coincidence. An ocean of research tells us that an important core need of children is to feel connected and that a sense of belonging is foundational for all learning.

Try another one. Ask the same person about their worst memory from elementary school or middle school. The answer will undoubtedly be about feeling excluded, singled out, or feeling alone.

Charles River School deeply understands the importance of connection and community. If my first summer as Head of Charles River School was a song, the word "community" was the chorus. I spent all summer asking students, teachers, alumni, and trustees what they loved most about CRS, and the word *community* was on repeat in every conversation. Time and again, children and adults shared with me that they could bring their full selves to CRS and they loved the opportunities to learn and grow in our diverse community.

That's why this year's theme is ***Everybody In, Nobody Out.***

At CRS, community is our greatest strength. At the same time, ensuring a sense of belonging for all students and families is work that is never finished.

Students at CRS know that their teachers and classmates care about them, and they practice caring for others. Meaningful connections power the learning process across our sixteen-acre campus and bind

"the pursuit of academic excellence" to "the joy of childhood," two core values found in the first line of our mission. At CRS, we challenge students to stretch themselves all day long: to tackle new formulas in math, conduct a conversation in French or Spanish, program a robot, or perform in a sharing assembly.

In order to leap and soar, students need to allow themselves to be vulnerable and risk making mistakes and falling down.

That's why CRS teaches children to pick each other up. CRS students learn to cheer for each other and care for each other. CRS teaches kids to be great teammates.

CRS also recognizes that teachers and families are teammates for students. As a parent of twins in the second grade—two very different learners and children—I am grateful for CRS teachers, who are partners with my wife Rebecca and me in raising our children and giving each of them what they need to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. I am honored to be part of such a special school community where teachers and families work as a team to guide our students through childhood's finish line on the other side of eighth grade.

One last thing: If you ask a Charles River School student or member of our alumni community about their happiest memories, just make sure you have a lot of time because they have very long lists! Here's to another year of our children adding to them. 🐉

With gratitude,  
**Gabe Burnstein**







PreK/K students and teacher Ayan Osman ▲ experiment with “snow”

## Do You Want to Build a Snowman?

**DURING A WINTER** with very little snow in Massachusetts the PreK/K classroom took matters into their own hands and made some of their own! They used the scientific method to hypothesize what might happen when they combine ingredients, observed the changes in consistency as they mixed it together, and experimented with different variables (such as water vs. hair conditioner mixed with baking soda). Then they moved their “snow” to the sensory table and got to work building a snowman!

## Curriculum Coffee Illuminates Health and Wellness

**PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS** joined Associate Head of School Elizabeth Clayton, School Counselor Sammy Robertson, and teachers Sarah Fishman and Sarah Wong for a discussion of how health and wellness is woven into the classroom curriculum. Visitors explored tables with examples from across campus, including materials from Yale’s RULER program with explanations of the four RULER tools (Community Agreement, Mood Meter, Meta Moment, and Blueprint). There were also “Yardsticks” materials with summaries of common behaviors at each age and suggestions of how to respond, picture books used by PreK-Grade 2 to begin conversations about emotions and belonging, examples of ways SEL enters into the classroom in Grades 3, 4, 5, and examples from Growth Education (GE) class with literature that students in Grades 6, 7, 8 read that have SEL connections. Then each educator spoke about specific ways they include health and wellness in their academic planning and curriculum.





Dr. Ali Michael

## Faculty Professional Development

**DR. ALI MICHAEL**, Co-Director of the Race Institute for K-12 Educators, works with schools and organizations across the country to help make research on race and education more accessible to educators. She partnered with CRS throughout the 2022-23 school year, leading professional development for faculty and staff in September, October, January, and April, and facilitating a book discussion with parents and caregivers in January. Says Associate Head of School Elizabeth Clayton, “It was important to us to have Dr. Michael engage with the CRS community in a series of conversations, rather than just one workshop, as we continue our work to make sure all students, teachers, and family members feel seen, heard, and respected on our campus. Her research focuses on helping educators mitigate the effects of institutional and individual racism in the classroom and the time she spent with the CRS faculty was incredibly valuable.”

## Students Build Skills While Welcoming Admissions Visitors

**CRS RETURNED** to welcoming prospective students for day-long visits in the classrooms in January. In addition to being an important part of the admissions process for applicants, these visits allow our current students to hone their leadership skills as they welcomed others and practiced kindness. Prior to the visits, students in classrooms across campus brainstormed questions applicants might have, aspects of the day that might be confusing, and ways they could put visitors at ease. Responses spanned the gamut from practical concerns (where the bathrooms are located, making sure to introduce visitors to specialist teachers) to communicating CRS culture (games at recess, acronyms such as the ECB), to considering the emotions (nervousness, excitement) that visitors would be feeling. With empathy and care, each classroom articulated the way they would want to be treated and students gave thought to how they would act if chosen to be a visitor’s buddy. Allowing students to take ownership of the visiting process helps our Otters recognize the important role they play in creating a welcoming and inclusive community.

Libby Dow ’31 totes her belongings in a suitcase during spirit week

## Spirit Week: Anything But a Backpack

**AS EVERYONE KNOWS**, New England winters can be long. 5th graders helped by organizing a campus-wide Spirit Week, which helped alleviate the winter doldrums. One of these days, the directive was for students to use their imaginations to pack their belongings in anything BUT a backpack.





### City Planners in Grades 1/2

**STUDENTS IN GRADES 1 & 2** completed mapping projects, designing rural, suburban, and urban neighborhoods. Starting with discussions about how many roads to include (and where to put them), group members collaborated on adding the types of buildings and nature that would be realistic for the population of each place.

This thematic lesson draws from core academic skills. For example, prior to getting started, students discussed mathematical scale in relation to building sizes. It is a great example of how our students explore different angles and think through disciplines by way of real-world themes and hands-on projects. This has a profound effect on what they learn since they understand the “why.” At CRS, we seamlessly connect knowledge,



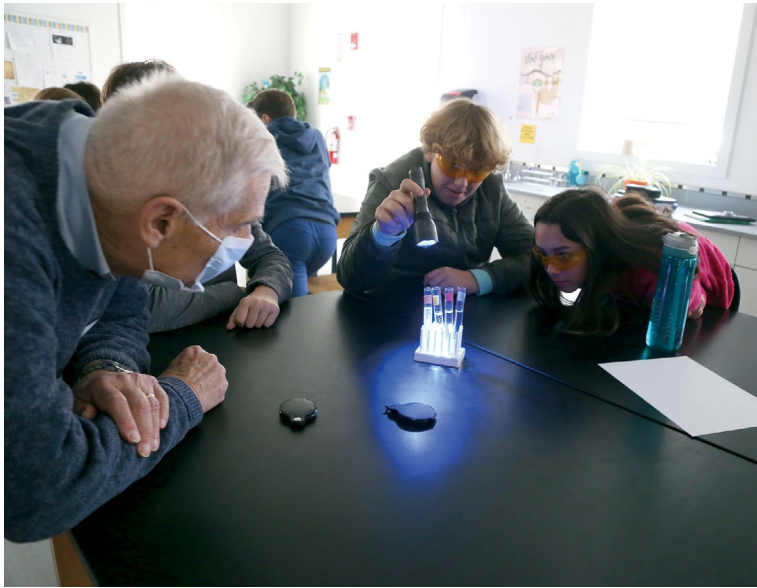
wonder, and outcomes to drive high engagement every day and eager anticipation for what's to come.

The finished cities and towns that the students created were on display in their classrooms and the upstairs hallways of the ECB.



Students in the Highlands begin the work of drawing a map to scale

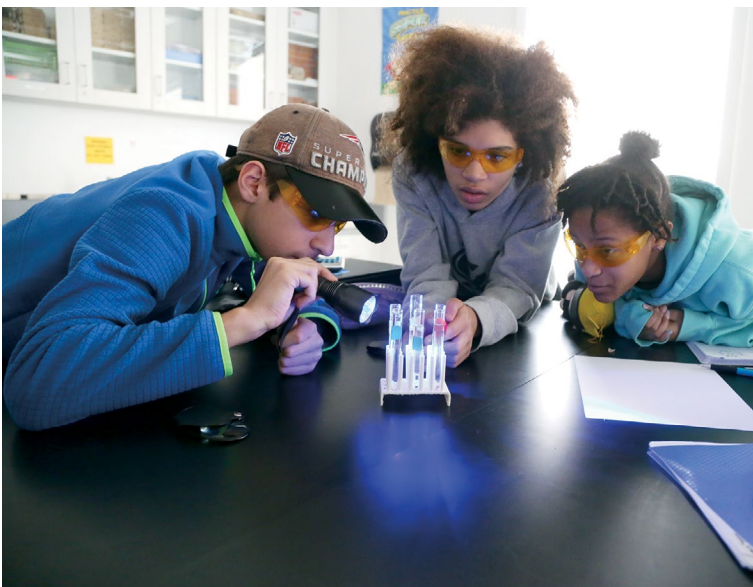




Students Dudley Willis '23 and Akira Baruni '23 work with a visitor from Minerva Action Group

## Middle School Scientists Learn with Experts

**VISITORS FROM THE MINERVA ACTION GROUP** visited an eighth-grade science lab in the spring to lead an experiment on microplastics in water. Students tested several brands of bottled water, as well as tap water samples and even snow! A dye added to the water sample stuck to any small microplastics in the sample and could be seen using a special wavelength of light. After the experiment, the students and visiting experts discussed ways to reduce plastics in our environment as well as broader issues of climate science.



8th graders Cole Miranda '23, Idhalia Brown '23, and Sydney Townsend '23 examine microplastics in water samples



Students, parents, caregivers, and teachers play Ultimate Frisbee together

## Adults vs. Students Games Cap Off Sports Seasons

**PARENTS AND CAREGIVERS** dusted off their sports equipment, slipped on their favorite athletic gear, and (hopefully) limbered up before facing off against students in a multitude of sports this year. Soccer, basketball, flag football, and Ultimate Frisbee matchups between student-athletes and the adults in their lives (faculty, parents, and caregivers) provided plenty of opportunities for good sportsmanship, friendly banter, and competition. Paul Rupprecht, Director of Athletics, commented, "These games are an excellent chance to engage our community and to promote a lifelong love of sports. Plus, the kids enjoy nothing more than showing up the adults with their athletic skills!"



### Field Trips Return to Support Curriculum

**CRS OTTERS WERE OUT AND ABOUT** around Massachusetts this spring as field trips were once again a safe way to enhance our curriculum. Field trips allow students to explore new environments, make connections to their classroom work, and collaborate with their peers in new ways. In one week alone this May, our PreK/K students explored Southwick's Zoo in Mendon, the Highlands and the Coast took classes at Plimoth Patuxet in Plymouth, and Grade 3 visited the Peabody Essex Museum in Peabody.

Additionally, Grade 5 traveled to Revere Beach to collect plastic trash and other beach debris. Acting as citizen scientists, students tallied and recorded all of the items they found and then submitted their data to the Ocean Conservancy's Trash Free Seas. This field trip was part of an interdisciplinary project in the students' science, humanities, and art classes which ultimately led to the creation of a piece of art that will bring awareness to the CRS community about the effects of plastic pollution on marine life.

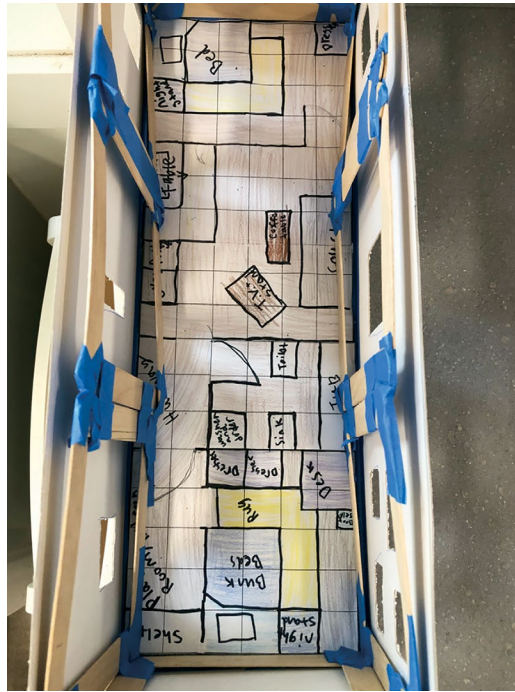


Third graders enjoying the opportunity to learn off-campus



Fifth graders collect trash at Revere Beach





## Tiny Homes in the Classroom

By Rachel Miller, Grade 5 Co-Teacher

**THE TINY HOME PROJECT** is a multi-disciplinary STEAM project that fifth graders have participated in for several years, including this spring. A critical component of this STEAM inquiry is developing empathy toward the people around whom the problem is designed, helping to develop students who are compassionate, understand the purpose in the mathematics they are doing, and want to make the world a better place. The connection with the school's mission to graduate students who, "know themselves, understand others, and shape the future of our diverse world with confidence and compassion," makes this a valuable piece of our curriculum.

To launch the project, students receive information about the fictional family for whom they will be designing a home. This year, students got to know the Calder family- Janice and her two children: Susan, age 10, and Charlie, age 4, who have been living in a shelter for 12 months. Fifth graders learn about the family's daily routine and how living in a

shelter impacts their lives. Students discover the difference between the Calder's monthly expenses and monthly income, reaching the conclusion that Janice cannot afford to provide for her family with a job that pays \$9.00 per hour. Next, the class learned about a company that can 3D print tiny homes for a cost of about \$4,000. Students go back to their financial sheet and see how a 3D-printed tiny home with a monthly payment of \$400 might change the Calder's situation.

Students were then given the following problem statement: "The Calder family needs your help! We have been hired as a design firm to work on affordable housing with this family in mind. Our task is to design, prototype, and test a tiny home for them to live in. It is important that we include the most important aspects they might need to make their life more comfortable. The Calder family lives in the south, so we need to consider warm weather in our plans. The Calder's are counting on you and your expertise!"

Following the steps that real designers use, students spent time planning and creating multiple options for their design. Drawing to scale can be challenging, so the fifth graders used a scale that can be represented using manipulatives. For their drawings, they used a scale of 1 inch = 2 feet. The final step of the project is to create a usable model of their tiny home based on the floor plans they drew. The homes students designed needed to will fit in our classroom, so throughout the project they explored their design ideas in the context of real space.

During this project students not only practiced their math skills (multiplication, applying the formulas for area, perimeter, and volume), their spatial reasoning skills, and their engineering skills with an eye to how they might be used in a real world context, they also were able to compassionately design a usable space for a family they would never meet. 🏠



A man with dark hair, smiling, is sitting on a set of wide wooden steps. He is wearing a white long-sleeved button-down shirt, a blue tie with yellow diagonal stripes, and dark blue trousers. His hands are clasped in his lap, and he is wearing a black smartwatch on his left wrist. The background is a warm, light-colored wooden wall.

# Welcoming Gabe Burnstein

**CHIEF LEARNER**

## SPEND A LITTLE TIME WITH GABE BURNSTEIN, CRS'S NEW HEAD OF SCHOOL,

and you'll likely notice that he asks a lot of questions,  
which is an important quality for someone leading a school community.

**A** **TRULY GREAT LEADER** needs to be curious, humble, and ready to listen to others. Gabe's diplomacy in approaching his new role is evident; he clearly respects the deep history of CRS and the values and traditions rooted in its community. He wants to fully understand the foundation of the institution rather than diving into making changes. He describes his role as being "chief learner," modeling how one learns and listens.

"Curiosity is key. I'll never pretend to have all the answers, but I can find them with the right questions and input from others," Gabe explains. "I spent the summer meeting with every faculty and staff member, trustee, and member of the leadership team, and asking them the same questions so that I can learn about the school and understand its strengths...and where can we improve. I want to listen and learn first."

This quest for the full picture is rooted in Gabe's personal history. Raised outside Detroit, Michigan, as the child of a teacher and a screenwriter, Gabe's sights were set on Hollywood, and he moved to Los Angeles to become a screenwriter after studying English and film at the University of Michigan. To pay the bills, he took a role as a coach and substitute teacher at Campbell Hall, an independent school in LA, which soon snowballed into more work at the school. He became a full-time teacher, then a dean.

"I loved being with kids and I loved collaborating with teachers and figuring out how to best support students," he explains. Over time, it became clear that, "the things I love about screenwriting - about storytelling - I'm actually doing as a history teacher and as an educator."

His eyes light up at the opportunity to tell the story of CRS. "I'm excited to be able to share what I'm learning about this school with the community—to use that screenwriting training to communicate what's so special about this place and what I'm seeing as a parent or as a teacher or as a school leader."

Gabe and his wife, Rebecca, and four children—Remy, Moses, Juliette, and Max—moved from Providence to the CRS campus in Dover over the summer. Their twins, Moses and Juliette, joined the 1/2 class this fall, providing Gabe with another lens through which to view the CRS experience.

"Parenting is hard! It's the hardest work we do as humans, raising other little humans into adulthood," Gabe says. "The experience gives me so much empathy for everyone in the school community. I've been a teacher, I've been a parent, I've been a school administrator, I've been a coach. These varying perspectives help me think

Gabe Burnstein talks with students  
during CRS Summer camp.





Gabe's eyes light up at the opportunity to tell the story of CRS.

"I'm excited to be able to share what I'm learning about this school with the community—to communicate what's so special about this place and what I'm seeing as a parent, or as a teacher, or as a school leader."

about how to strengthen the partnership between home and school."

He speaks to the importance of this parent-teacher connection as part of the DNA of Charles River School, having been founded in 1911 by four sets of parents. A relationship of mutual respect and clear communication is imperative when teachers and caregivers interact. "I'm looking forward to this group of faculty helping Rebecca and me raise our children. The teachers will know things about our kids—as learners and people—that they're going to teach us; that's where that partnership is so real."

When asked about his leadership style, Gabe points to his mentor, the late Pearl Rock Kane, former director of Columbia Teachers' College's Klingenstein Center for Independent School Leadership, who preached that "leadership is a behavior, not a title." To that end, Gabe is a firm believer in being a values-driven leader, which is why CRS held such an appeal for him. The school's mission aligns with his own values, which include optimism, service, and teamwork.

"I believe in teamwork. Nothing good happened because one person did it alone. The leader's job is to build teams and harness the power of a diverse group of people, with different backgrounds and perspectives."

Gabe understands the balance of needing a sense of belonging and needing to cultivate disparate perspectives and experiences. He reflects on his own childhood experience as one of only two Jewish kids in his large public middle school, when he was turned to for answers from students and teachers alike while studying the Holocaust. "I was so uncomfortable, and I felt so under the spotlight."

Then, in 8th grade, he delved into a research project as a version of a bar mitzvah, choosing to study the Jewish people who were allies during the Civil Rights Movement. "It was a really powerful experience that taught me a lot about a sense of belonging. It wasn't about victimhood, it was about people who are like me who did an important thing that I can be proud of. It gave me a mirror experience. I really needed that at that age."

Gabe is quick to provide the disclaimer that, as a straight, white man in America, his experiences have been

Gabe Burnstein  
with students in  
the library



Head of School Gabe Burnstein  
P'30 '30 and Associate Head of  
School Elizabeth Clayton P'17 '20







The Burnstein Family:  
Remy, Moses, Gabe, Max,  
Rebecca, and Juliette

overwhelmingly about fitting in, not being an outsider. But memories such as these help shape his awareness and understanding for the curricular need for mirrors (a version of one's own experience) and windows (a view into a different experience).

"Children can't do the most challenging academic work and grow if they don't feel a sense of belonging. So you have to build safety and a place to be vulnerable—and those aren't separate. Once you have that, then kids can do anything."

In particular, Gabe believes strongly in the PreK-8th grade model for schools; these are the environments that allow students the security and space to thrive. One of the benefits of this is the authentic interactions between younger and older children, on the playground and during scheduled opportunities, such as buddy time and sharing assemblies. Younger kids have older students as role models, while older students get to continue to experience childhood even as they practice

responsibility and build leadership skills. Gabe notes that "Every child benefits."

In addition to building confidence on campus, Gabe is interested in ways to incorporate the resources of the greater community into students' experiences. He's already talking with faculty about field trips, partnerships, and other opportunities to get off campus more often. "As kids get older their world needs to get bigger. Let's think about how we can use the Greater Boston area—or the whole country—as our classroom!"

No matter what the curriculum or where the classroom is based, Gabe professes the importance of teaching kids how to think, not what to think, because "our students are going to solve problems that they've never seen before." He explains that there are five "durable and transferable" skills that all kids need to learn during their time at CRS: communication, collaboration, critical thinking, creativity, and empathy. "Kids can take these core skills wherever they need

them. We are educating students for today and tomorrow."

It's clear that these core skills are the tenets of his own leadership. As a coach, Gabe would encourage his athletes not to worry about the scoreboard, but to focus on the process—what's happening right now—and that's how he intends to lead. "I'm someone who cares a lot about real, transparent, equitable, thoughtful processes—where we bake the values of the school into every process, and that's how I approach things."

"I draw a lot of energy from being with people, and I'm going to spend the year getting to know everyone," Gabe explains. As he does, he'll employ his trademark enthusiasm and inquisitive nature to ensure that his leadership of CRS is informed by an understanding of where the school has been and how we can best prepare our students to know themselves, understand others, and shape the future of our diverse world with confidence and compassion. ☺





Nicolo Gaybor as Simba



Idhalia Brown as Rafiki



From left, Sydney Townsend and Alex Brody



Aiden Jarboe as Young Simba

# 8th Graders Perform The Lion King, Jr.

The eighth grade presented *The Lion King, Jr.* in May to rave reviews. Before rehearsals began, students studied the themes and context of *The Lion King* in a cross-curricular unit between social studies and multiarts classes, including critically looking at the depiction of characters perpetuating stereotypes in the animated movie and the increased representation of South African creators, music, and Black artists in the Broadway show. The final production reflected these conversations and showcased the amazing talents of our eighth graders! 🦁



From left, Caroline Webb, Ronan Lyman, Aiden Jarboe, Alex Brody, and Nicholas Alborno perform a musical number



From left, Caroline Webb and Dudley Willis sing "Hakuna Matata"



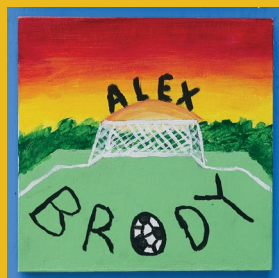
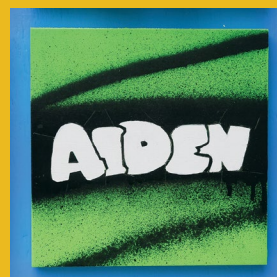
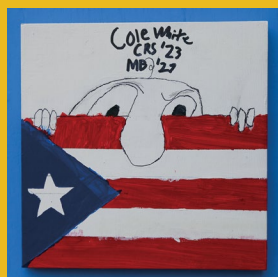
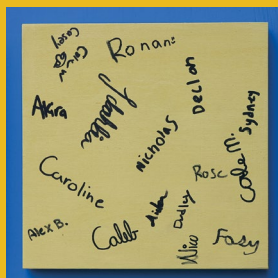
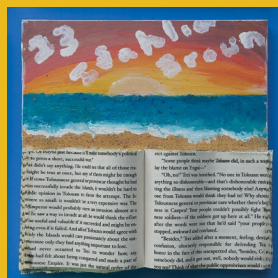
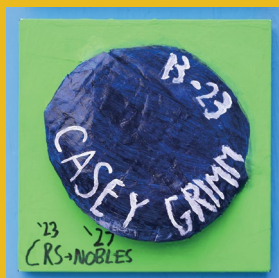
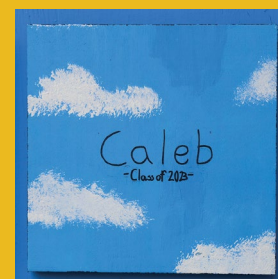
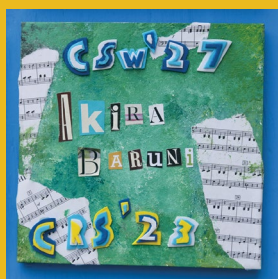
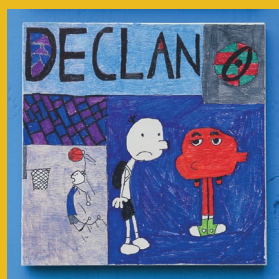
From left, Alex Brody, Akira Baruni, Rose McMillan, and Idhalia Brown

8th Graders on stage



# Graduation Tiles

**A long-standing CRS tradition**, the tiles created by graduating students have evolved in recent years. The newest iteration of the project, introduced in 2021, was born of necessity given the limited access students had to work with clay during the Covid 19 pandemic. However, the updated project, which incorporates two- and three-dimensional media on birch wood panels, has allowed students to broaden the artistic techniques they incorporate and has led to beautiful, lightweight displays which will grace the walls of the school for years to come. 🌱



We wish our graduates the best as they start high school!





Teacher Jen  
Worthington works  
with students in  
the Coast

# The Writing Journey

**Throughout all grades, students explore the value of learning to write. This creative expression—and, yes, even scientific writing is an art form—is woven into the critical learning and skill-building that happens at Charles River School. It also allows students the outlet they need to share a piece of themselves.**

**MANY PARENTS AND CARETAKERS HAVE A FILE OR BOX TUCKED AWAY IN THEIR HOME**, filled with treasured memories from their child's school years. You know the one—it has pieces of artwork with paint-dipped handprints turned into tulips. Maybe you saved the first time your child wrote a complete sentence about their favorite season or the first research paper that explained the photosynthesis process. The collection lets you see your student's progress in visual and written expression: drawings of flowers lead to sentences about signs of spring that blossom into fully-researched science papers. It's hard not to smile looking at your child's earliest work and compare it to how far they've come over the years. Those papers map out a learning journey.

So, how does a student move from basic letter formation in PreK/K to constructing a supportable thesis statement in Grades 7 & 8? At CRS, there is a thoughtful progression in how we teach language arts and the principles of communication, which, in addition to writing, include reading, listening, and discussion. Just as you can see the improvement as you pull each paper out of that keepsake box, you can track skill building in writing by looking at examples at each grade and understanding how it correlates to the educational standards being taught in the classroom. And, while students learn how to write, they're also learning why they should write. From self-expression and the joy of creating something



new to problem-solving and strategizing, there is an aspect of writing for everyone.

Starting in PreK/K, students produce illustrations, stories, narratives, and teacher-supported dictations. Young students are encouraged to use inventive spelling, an important part of early literacy that helps students express ideas without the pressure of accurate spelling. “Inventive spelling is also an indicator of a student’s ability to decode or break down the sounds in a word, which is called phonological awareness,” explains PreK/K Co-Teacher Dorothy Gregoire. “As students’ phonological awareness increases, they are able to expand their writing, reading, and language development.”

First and second graders learn that recording their experiences makes lasting impressions. They are exposed to the steps of the writing process: writing rough drafts, conferencing with peers and teachers, and

revising their work. At this stage, students are building composition skills such as writing sentences of varying complexity, applying phonetic instruction to written work, and using developing vocabulary, all while discovering their creativity. Third graders continue to write from personal experience and create original, imaginative stories by developing topics, understanding story structure, and learning the importance of fluent writing. Students use a concrete and systematic approach to construct complete sentences and enhance those sentences. Skill development is more complex and includes using similes and metaphors, learning to use a dictionary effectively, and memorizing non-phonetic words, spelling rules, high-frequency words, and sight words.

While self-expression and writing about personal experiences continue in the upper elementary grades, students begin to write

more expository paragraphs and research reports in the fourth and fifth grades. “In the winter, fourth graders write a research paper for the Religion Project, which ties closely to our theme. By that point in the year, students know what to do,” says Grade 4 Co-Teacher Laura Mutch. “They read informational texts, take notes on certain aspects of their chosen religion, organize the notes, and turn them into multiple paragraphs that create a paper when put together. The growth points for our writers during this religion research paper are easy to identify. Students can do sophisticated things in their writing at this stage.” By fifth grade at CRS, students can demonstrate mastery in a number of areas, which is critical in creating a bridge to middle and high

From left, Ayda Zisfein-Shea '27, teacher Sarah Fishman, and Blair Peterson '27

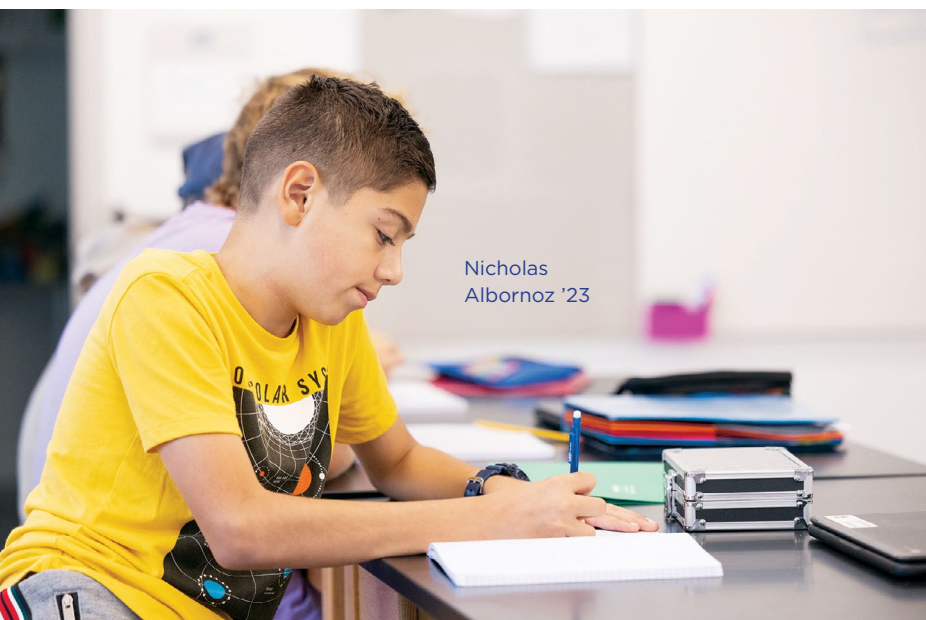






From left, Kayla Itzkovits  
'25, Sam Murphy '25, Gray  
Stokes '25, and teacher  
Chris MacDonald

school. Students write daily and have mastered subject-predicate, verbs of being, articles, interjections, and the use of commas in a series, dates, letter salutations, and closings between city and state. Fifth graders love diving into Writer's Workshop and start to understand themselves as writers. Developing their own styles is exciting and fun.



Nicholas  
Alborno '23

Students need to establish character traits, use plot context, select evidence from the text, and analyze that evidence. It takes a lot of planning and organization; skills they have honed for years as young writers.

In addition to continuing to write both general fiction and research papers, students in the sixth grade move on to long-form, analytical writing, a style they will use for the rest of their formal education. "As students design body paragraphs for a literary analysis, for example, they are asked to incorporate several things," says Grade 6 Co-Teacher Chris MacDonald. "They need to establish character traits, use plot context, select evidence from the text, and analyze that evidence. It takes a lot of planning and organization; skills they have honed for years as young writers."



Silas Williams '25  
and teacher  
Monica Chrambach

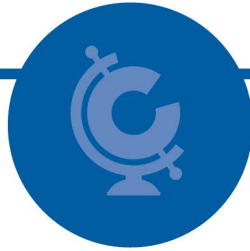
When students reach Grades 7 & 8, they can take the skills they have learned and apply it to a variety of styles of writing for myriad purposes. Over the course of two years, students write in analytical, fiction, nonfiction, poetry, and expository formats. They also demonstrate proficiency in persuasive, narrative, and descriptive writing and can construct original thesis statements with support from correctly formatted evidence. Skill building at this level continues and sets students up for success in high school and beyond.

Just like the art of written expression, designing a PreKindergarten through Grade 8 curriculum that promotes confidence and skill building is a complex undertaking. Teachers help students apply what they know at each stage of the learning process and challenge students to think critically along the way. 🐼





Former  
Head of School  
Gretchen Larkin  
addresses the  
graduating class



Cole Miranda '23

# CONGRATULATIONS graduates

— CLASS OF 2023 —







Parents Magdalena Bernal and Julian Albornoz with Nicholas Albornoz '23



Akira Baruni '23



Alex Brody '23 receives her diploma from Gretchen Larkin



Sydney Townsend '23



Cole Fosbroke '23



Dudley Willis '23





End-to-Enders from left, Nicolo Gaybor, Casey Grimm, and Dudley Willis



Ronan Lyman '23



Members of the Class of 2023 perform the song "Memories"



Cole White '23 accepts his diploma from Gretchen Larkin



The Class of 2023 on stage in Foster Hall



## 2023 GRADUATES



*Nicholas*  
**Albornoz**



*Nicolo*  
**Gaybor**



*Caleb*  
**Stokes**



*Akira*  
**Baruni**



*Casey*  
**Grimm**



*Sydney*  
**Townsend**



*Alexandria*  
**Brody**



*Aiden*  
**Jarboe**



*Caroline*  
**Webb**



*Idahlia*  
**Brown**



*Ronan*  
**Lyman**



*Cole*  
**White**



*Declan*  
**Casey**



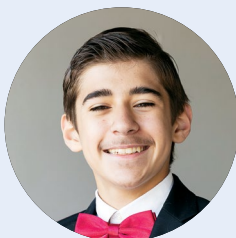
*Rose*  
**McMillan**



*Dudley*  
**Willis**



*Cole*  
**Fosbroke**



*Cole*  
**Miranda**



## CREATING CURRICULUM

# The Origins of Comm-Pres

By **Sarah Clancy**, Multi-Arts and Comm-Pres Teacher

**WHEN I JOINED THE CRS COMMUNITY** in the 2020-2021 school year, one community-wide trait became clear to me: CRS students were willing and eager communicators. In the carpool circle every afternoon students chatted with each other and with adults with genuine engagement. As CRS returned to welcoming parents, caregivers and other visitors to campus, I experienced a school year bursting with performances and projects—the fourth grade religion project, eighth grade TedTalks, 6th & Broadway, and the first and second grade classrooms sharing their paper weaving project, just to name a few.

It can be easy to assume, in this type of environment, that all students are naturally gifted with a comfort speaking in front of an audience. However, public speaking and presentation skills are, just like other aspects of the Charles River School curriculum, learned in the classroom and practiced across campus. In the Spring of 2022, -an idea started brewing to develop a class to formalize this instruction by focusing on public speaking and presentations to strengthen, focus, and hone CRS students' skills, comfort, and preparation. As Mica Moellering, Head of Performing Arts, and I worked on a summer curriculum grant, it sparked the idea to broaden the class to include communication skills beyond just public speaking, focusing specifically on effective verbal and non-verbal communication and engaged and reflective listening.

Inspiration for this shift in focus was drawn from my own education and training. One of the most impactful college courses I took was called Interpersonal Communication. As a performing arts student, I was familiar with studying human behavior and practicing hours of listening, but this class opened up why we act the way we do and how to better navigate the hurdles of miscommunication with each other. My brain started cooking during that curriculum grant about how theatre games and activities could be used to practice public speaking, effective listening skills, conflict resolution, and group collaboration, and to bolster students' ability to pay attention to the hundreds of non-verbal cues we're giving each other regardless of what we're saying. With Foster Hall as our classroom, this class would combine the study and understanding of communication with the space to practice the skills on our feet.



**Top:** Comm-Pres students on stage.  
**Bottom:** 5th graders were among those who honed their presentation skills this year

Communication-Presentations (Comm-Pres) was introduced as a class for all third, fourth and fifth grade students in September 2022. We began the year by studying the anatomy of the voice. Often students are asked to be “louder” in the classroom or on stage, but maintaining a strong, healthy speaking voice takes supported breath, muscle relaxation, and using our articulators (lips, teeth, palate, tongue) to create more sound in our resonators (nasal, throat, and sinus cavities). Each class looked at how our vocal folds hit together and combined with our breath create sound. Then we put down our clipboards and experimented with creating sound and what it took for each of our bodies to change volume, pitch, pacing and tone.

Another favorite was an “active listening” unit where we examined and experimented with how open-ended, probing, and clarifying questions can bring clarity and reiterate to the speaker that we are paying attention. In one exercise, students began by telling each other a story with specific details as their partners asked three questions

before retelling the story as accurately as possible to a third person. We also looked at what can distract us while we are trying to pay attention and how to reengage with the conversation.

The vision for Comm-Pres takes advantage of monthly sharing assemblies. The fourth grade kicked off a November sharing assembly with a performance of an excerpt of the poem “Odder” by Katherine Applegate. Using the emotion and creative language of Applegate’s poetry, each student delivered their stanza with poise, clarity, and expression. The third grade memorized Shel Silverstein poems and demonstrated how creatively the poems could be interpreted and performed. The fifth grade ended the year with a final speechwriting project themed around a favorite memory from their time at CRS so far. They wrote, edited and rehearsed the speech using peer feedback and self-evaluation from recorded practice sessions, and then filmed their final speeches from the podium in Foster Hall.

Comm-Pres also collaborates closely with the classroom teachers on project-based learning both in skill-laying for future projects and during the project process. This model will continue as the course evolves and becomes an established complement to the classroom curriculum. 🎤





A SUCCESSFUL SPRING SEASON

CRS Otters competed in Track and Field, Ultimate Frisbee, and Girls Lacrosse this spring, honing both their athletic skills and their leadership and sportsmanship capabilities. Congratulations to our spring athletes!

Dom Culbreath '24



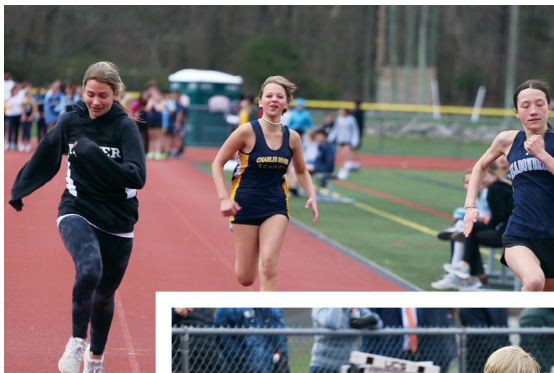
Ellie Apfel '25



Brennan Judge '26



Rose McMillan '23



Ultimate Frisbee team



Nate Newmark '24

Stephen Barton '26



Lacrosse team



Ultimate Frisbee team



## SPORTS DAY

### THE ANNUAL BLUE VS. GOLD TRADITION NEVER DISAPPOINTS!

Students from PreK-8 enjoyed a festive day on the fields in May, playing cooperative games with buddies and competing in races, hyperspace, and other events. Spirits were high, especially among members of the Blue Team who won this year's competition.



A sea of Blue and Gold surrounded the field



Oliver Gallinaro '29 and Beau Roller '30



Akira Baruni '23



Oliver Poe '27 and Diya Shah '27 in the relays



Buddy games started the day



Blue and Gold



Emma Bagchi '28



Reid Apfel '29 and Caleb Ginsberg '25



# New Faculty & Staff



**Michelle Faithfull**  
GRADE 5 CO-TEACHER

Michelle Faithfull has joined Grade 5 as a Co-Teacher. Michelle comes to us most recently from the John Eliot School in Needham, where she also taught 5th grade. Prior to that, Michelle taught 4th grade at Dedham Country Day School and was a 6th Grade teacher at the Advent School in Boston. She has a background in co-teaching and thematic curriculum development and is passionate about helping students thrive in the classroom. Michelle earned a B.S. in Elementary Education from Skidmore College, where she began her career as a student teacher in New York public schools, and a Master's in Education from Boston University.



**Rachel Jackson**  
SCHOOL NURSE

Our new school nurse, Rachel Jackson, has been a nurse at Walpole High School for the past nine years and served as a district nurse in the Walpole Public Schools before that. She is familiar with CRS as she has worked with our summer camps the past two years. An active and committed community member, Rachel has served on the Walpole Board of Health and has worked as a home health aide. Rachel has a B.S. in Nursing from Fitchburg State College and a Master's in Education with a concentration in School Nursing from Cambridge College.



**Jenny Salamone**  
7 & 8 ENGLISH TEACHER

Joining the 7/8 team as the English teacher is Jenny Salamone, an experienced educator who empowers her students to explore, think critically, and use their voices. Jenny was most recently a 7th-grade social studies teacher and 8th-grade English teacher at Dana Hall School. Jenny also served as an 8th-grade advisor at Dana Hall and was involved in athletics and clubs as well. Prior to that, Jenny was a high school English teacher at the Walnut Hill School and did her student teaching at Fay School. Jenny has a B.A. from Wellesley College.



**Kelsey Thomas**  
LIBRARY AND MEDIA  
SPECIALIST

Library and Media Specialist Kelsey Thomas came to CRS from The Little School in Bellevue, Washington where she was the Librarian for the past four years; before that, she served as the Early Childhood and Middle and Upper School Librarian at the Dwight School in New York City. Kelsey has developed curriculum designed to teach media skills and a love of literature through an anti bias lens, supporting the social and emotional growth of each child. Kelsey earned a B.A. from Smith College and a Master's in Library Science from the Pratt Institute.



# New Trustees



**Cindy Welch**  
GRADE 6 STEM TEACHER

The new Grade 6 Math and Science Teacher, Cindy Welch, was most recently a science teacher and advisor at Dana Hall School, where she taught chemistry and biology and was the Assistant Director of the Upper School. Cindy was also an advisor, a class dean, and served on multiple committees. Before teaching at Dana Hall, Cindy taught science and led after-school help in both math and science at Western High School in Baltimore, MD and was a laboratory safety specialist at Brown University. Cindy holds a B.S. in Biochemistry from St. Michael's College, a M.S. in Chemistry from Johns Hopkins University, and a Master's in Teaching from Johns Hopkins University.



**Molly Carney**

Molly lives in Dover with her husband Ned and their two children, Piper '29 and Brennan '31. Molly has a background in educational research and consulting. A former teacher, she has contributed to major research studies centered on education reform, innovation in teacher preparation, and equity in schooling. She is a founding board member of Scholarship for Global Education, a nonprofit organization that provides college scholarships to high-need students in Guyana. Molly holds a Ph.D. from Boston College, an M.Ed. from Harvard University, and a B.A. from the University of Notre Dame. At CRS, Molly has served as a host family, class parent, and member of the Enrollment Management Committee, and is currently co-chairing CRS's Climb Higher campaign.



**Beth Newmark**

Beth lives in Needham with her husband Adam and their two sons, Nate '24 and Nolan '27. The Newmark family joined the CRS community for the 2019–2020 school year. Beth quickly became active in the Parent Association and finished her two-year term as Treasurer in June. Beth is a Deputy General Counsel & Managing Director at Bank of America where she has worked for 16 years. Beth currently serves as the General Counsel to the Private Bank and Wealth Management Banking businesses. She began her legal career as a civil litigator in private practice. Beth earned her J.D. from Boston College Law School and her B.A. from the University of Pennsylvania.



**Guoping Zhou**

Guoping Zhou lives in Sherborn with his wife Peggy and their sons Ian '22 (now a student at St. Sebastian's School), James '26, and Kyler (age 3). Guoping joined the CRS community in 2016 and currently serves on the CRS Development Committee and Climb Higher Campaign Committee. Guoping works as a senior executive at Intex Solutions, a leading analytical software and data provider in structured finance. He received a M.S. in Physics from Boston College.



# Young Alumni Return to CRS Summer Programs



Lifeguard Grady Savage '18 and Elena Trust '30

Counselor Jeremy Ridlon '18 gives a piggyback ride

## WALK AROUND CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL IN THE SUMMER

and every corner of the campus turns up a different activity. From the rock band practicing in Foster Hall, to campers splashing in the pool, to young entrepreneurs honing their pitches for a product they've created, to the shouts of soccer players on the fields, CRS Summer's diversity of programs is on display. This year, five options for children ages 2-14 were available: CRS Minis, Sports and STEM, Nature and STEM, Creative Arts, and Launchpad.

This vibrant program is led by a staff that includes many familiar faces, including three young alumni who have been relishing their time with the camp while reminiscing about their own experiences at CRS.

Lifeguard Grady Savage '18, a CRS end-to-ender, attended Charles River Creative Arts Program (CRCAP) through sixth grade and remembers the energy and welcoming atmosphere of the summers he spent on campus. It is the connections with counselors, opportunities to try new things, and specific classes—notably photography, band, big sports, and fencing—that created his most enduring memories.

"Being back on campus on a regular basis has been really nostalgic for me," says Grady. "I walk into a space like the gym and I'm



immediately remembering PE classes with Paula Converse and Coach V and Coach Rupp." Grady notes that after so many years as a student or camper, it has been interesting to be an adult on campus. Some of his former counselors are now his colleagues and he is in charge of the safety of campers all day long at the pool. That aspect of the job, however, is a familiar one; Grady has previously lifeguarded and has been a camp counselor at other camps. "I really enjoy working with kids and I was excited to get to return to CRS."

Now a sophomore at Swarthmore College, the Concord Academy alum plans to major in



Physics. Grady is a member of the Swarthmore Ultimate Frisbee team and has continued pursuing his love of music, which he developed as a student and camper; he currently sings in the college chorus and an a capella group.

Gabby Wood '21, a junior counselor who is in her second summer of working with the Nature and STEM program, is also enthusiastic about her time on campus. "I work with the youngest campers, so there's never a dull moment. I love how kids are so honest and real," Gabby says. "Returning this summer, it was great to see the community again. I'm working with children I've had in my group before, which is great, and reconnecting with other counselors, some of whom were here when I was a camper."

A junior at Loomis Chaffee, Gabby appreciates the preparation for high school that she received at CRS. She notes that she felt particularly well prepared in science and English, which helped make her academic transition a smooth one. Additionally, she is a track and field athlete (100M, 200M and long jump), an admissions tour guide, and a study hall proctor for younger students.

Gabby, a CRS end-to-ender and a former CRCAP camper, applauds the expansion of the CRS Summer options beyond the Creative Arts Program. "On the one hand, being back on campus this summer feels really familiar and it's nice to see everyone again. But, it's also cool to see the changes." That said, Gabby notes one change that she's reserving judgement on . . . for now. "I'll admit I'm feeling sentimental about the playground—I spent ten years playing on the old one!"

Another familiar face on campus this summer is Jeremy Ridlon '18. Jeremy started at CRS as a PreK student and attended through 6th grade, after which he left for Thayer Academy. Throughout this time, he stayed connected to the school. As he says, "Technically I've never

left CRS. Even after I went to a new school in 6th grade, I kept coming to camp here every summer. And after I was a camper I started working as a counselor. I've really never left. Since I was four years old I have always spent time on this campus."

Jeremy, a sophomore at Franklin and Marshall, leads classes such as basketball, big sports and soccer. He has also worked for our Extended Day Program during the school year when he's home on breaks. "The sense of community is so, so strong," Jeremy notes. "That and the creative environment over the summer is what keeps me coming back. The people I have met at camp are some of my best friends and my mentors. It is a lifelong connection and community, you can't find this anywhere else. Anyone can find their home here."

Jeremy reflects on his time as a student at CRS with fondness and appreciation. In particular, he notes that he had a leg up in terms of public speaking when he arrived at his secondary school. "That really stands out—when I got to high school so many of my peers were really terrified of presentations or getting on stage, and I was used to it all ready. Both Sharing Assemblies and performances from camp made me feel so comfortable from a young age speaking in front of other people."

The summer programs are enriched by the presence of these young alumni. Says Director of Admissions Kat Whitten, "It's a testament to the CRS community that alumni want to return, and those of us who were here when they were students love the opportunity to work with them." 🐼



From left, alumni Gabby Wood '21, Jeremy Ridlon '18, and Grady Savage '18



Counselor Gabby Wood '21 with campers



# Color on a Fresh Canvas

By **Chris MacDonald**, 6th Grade Humanities Teacher

**DIRECTLY OUTSIDE THE SIXTH GRADE CLASSROOMS** stands an enormous sliding barn door. You'd think it was a heavy door, but it's actually not. A mechanism lets it slide with ease, the pressure of gravity relieved. The door hangs there, like a giant canvas before my eyes; we'll have to do something about that, I think.

As I walked toward the buzz of my brand new classroom last September, I paused and placed my palm on the cool island countertop of the middle school atrium kitchen, and slowly inhaled. This was the first day of middle school for my students. It was also my first day teaching at the Charles River School. And this year, I'm not Mr. MacDonald. I'm "Chris." The same teacher, just on a first name basis. I exhaled and glanced at my watch. It's time to start the first day of sixth grade.

Students enter middle school unaware that they are searching for ways to find out who they are and who they might become. Luckily,

they've come to the right place. In humanities class, students are drawn to themes of power, justice, and identity throughout the year—themes that allow for thinking on new levels of depth and complexity while building capacity for empathy.

As a first year teacher at CRS, I outwardly embraced the notion that sixth grade is a fresh start in new terrain, for students and for me. "I'm new here," I told them. "But you are too. We'll need each other to figure this out." I made it my mission to learn as much from my students as possible. When you're new, you can ask all kinds of questions. The kids love answering. The back and forth builds a unique authenticity that serves as a backbone for the strong teacher-student and student-student relationships that lead to growth in learning.

"What do you think we should put up on the barn door?" I asked the kids in early October.

Twenty hands went up. One student, hand still raised, called out: "Colors! It needs colors!" ☺





# CRS is Climbing Higher

By Aquela Culbreath-Britt P'24

**If you listen closely, beyond the cacophony of the wetlands and buzz of children in the Community Building,** the joyous sounds of children at play can be heard at the center of the CRS campus. Whether you are among our oldest Otters, or just arriving here on campus, you have likely realized that joy, laughter, and children simply having space to be children are just a few of the things that make Charles River School an incredible place to grow and learn.

The joy of childhood is a core tenet of the Charles River School mission, and the success of the recent ***Climb Higher Campaign***—with a total raise of over \$2 million dedicated to financial aid and the much-anticipated playground redesign—would not have been possible without the generous efforts of current families, alumni, alumni families, and faculty. At Charles River School we are committed to providing access to our school, and this Campaign's success has made a permanent mark on our community's future. Our new, fully-accessible playground is 100% Otter approved; thank you to everyone who made this possible!



A rendering of the playground shows the exciting new features our Otters will enjoy this fall.



OUR COMMUNITY

From left, Cindy Welch P'27; Former Director of Equity, Belonging, and Community Life Nia Jacobs; and Director of Performing Arts Mica Moellering P'18

# Cheers to 9 Years

In early June, the CRS community came together to celebrate all of our accomplishments during Gretchen Larkin's remarkable nine years as Head of School. The event filled the festively transformed Dining Commons with current and past parents, alumni, faculty, and trustees who sent Bill and Gretchen Larkin off to their next adventure with gratitude and good wishes. Cheers!



Gretchen Larkin and Dudley Willis P'88 '89 '92 '94 GP'23 '30



Gretchen Larkin thanks the community







From left, parents Olivia Nakimera P'31, Shyanki Sandaradura P'32, and Chamara Sandaradura P'32



From left, Rebecca Grimm P'23 '25, Brian Grimm P'23 '25 and Director of Athletics Paul Rupprecht



From left, faculty members Tessa Steinert-Evoy, Sarah Clancy, and Julie Weeden



From left, Diana Baruni P'23, Geraldine Laguerre P'26, Cindy Fung P'26 '30, and Rachel Brown P'23 '26



From left, Magdalena Bernal P'23, Julian Albornoz P'23, and Jethro Townsend P'23



Joanna Travis P'19 '17 catches up with Charlotte Gregory Surgenor '67 P'00 '02 '05



Leslie Jackson Judge '91 P'24 '26 and Mary Kalamaras P'20



From left, Rachel Rosenfelt P'27 '29, Marko Rosenfeldt P'27 '29, Kerry Earley P'27, and Mike Earley P'27



# Faculty Farewell

At the end of the school year, CRS said goodbye to four long-standing members of our community who, between them, served the school for almost 90 years. Colleagues shared tributes to these amazing educators at the Final Assembly on June 8, 2023. Excerpts of their comments follow:



**Carol Ahearn**  
SCHOOL NURSE

Carol, kind and compassionate, you are also a fierce advocate for our students and their families. You have helped our school navigate everything from the day-to-day to the once-in-a-lifetime. It's not just Covid, though CRS weathered the global pandemic better than most schools thanks to your leadership. You've coped with SARS, avian flu, RSV, hoof and mouth disease, lice, strep, H1N1, not to mention food allergies, Epipens, requests for ice packs, broken bones, ensuring faculty are CPR and AED trained, medications, concussion protocols, the common cold . . . and perhaps most often of all, a child's simple need for the love and care that you are so capable of dispensing.

You are a household name for everyone who's been lucky enough to have you watching over them. While we are excited to welcome a new person to the nurse's office, there will never be another Nurse Carol.

— **Kat Whitten**, *Director of Admissions, P'14 '16*



**Leigh Hutchinson**  
7TH & 8TH GRADE ENGLISH TEACHER

Leigh, no one goes to bat for children like you do. I've seen it time and time again - whether you are advocating for a specific student or kids in general, you are relentless in making sure that the children are at the center of decisions, and that we remember school should be fun as well as challenging and engaging. Thank you for being a trusted teacher to both of my children, and a caring and dedicated advisor to Mary Cate. No one could have done it better.

— **Elizabeth Clayton**, *Associate Head of School, P'17 '20*

Thank you so much for always being there for me, even when I whined about meaningless things. Any time I pick up a book and read it for fun, I think Leigh would be so proud of me right now. You truly are a one-of-a-kind teacher, and I didn't realize just how lucky I was to be taught by you until I wasn't anymore. Thank you for everything you've ever done for me.

— **Mary Cate Clayton '20**





**Karen Pratt**  
LIBRARY AND DIGITAL  
MEDIA TEACHER

Karen, you have reinvented yourself many times over your years at CRS. You have worked as a classroom teacher; served as a cluster coordinator and curriculum leader; shaped the development of our early childhood mixed-age classrooms; acted as mentor, ally, and advocate for teachers; became the school librarian with a detailed plan for a library focused around inquiry and exploration; briefly became the third member of the technology department during COVID; and now you leave us for yet another new adventure.

Of all the roles you have played here, the most enduring one of all will be your absolute commitment to bringing out the extraordinary potential of our youngest students. Under your care, every child is seen as a researcher and scholar whose ideas and questions are just as worthy of investigation as any graduate-level student. I want to say a personal thank you from my own family, and from those of all the other families whose children have been blessed to have you as their teacher.

— **Steve Trust**, *Director of Technology*,  
P'27 '30



**Chris Raskin**  
HEALTH & WELLNESS COORDINATOR,  
INSTRUCTIONAL COACH, FORMER  
7TH & 8TH GRADE SOCIAL STUDIES  
TEACHER

Chris, you've left an everlasting mark on our social studies curriculum. From US Presidential elections to research assemblies, and mapping from memory, to papers, primary sources, and mock trials, you infused passion and a respect for history into each and every class. It is because of your dedication to your students and their knowledge of contemporary national and global issues that Model United Nations exists at CRS. You were its founding mother. That club sparked interest and curiosity in our students and excited them to pursue MUN beyond CRS.

Rigorous and demanding in the classroom, you were an expert listener and fierce advocate for your advisees, always a soft place for them to land. Your compassion, empathy, humor, intelligence and joy was deeply felt by each of your students, advisees and colleagues. Thank you for being such an inspirational teacher, mentor, and friend.

— **Julie Weeden**, *French Teacher and  
Middle School Coordinator*

## Admissions Dates to Know

The admissions season is under-way! We are so excited to get to know prospective students and their families, and to introduce them to Charles River School. The application deadline is January 15 and tours and admissions events began in mid-September.



### Individual Tours

Weekdays throughout the fall and winter

### Open Houses

Sunday, October 15

Friday, November 10

Thursday, November 16 (Middle School)

### Deadlines

Application Deadline: January 15, 2024

Financial Aid Deadline: February 1, 2024

### Notifications

Decisions are shared on March 10, 2024

Contracts are due April 10, 2024

### Questions?

Contact Director of

Admissions Kat Whitten at

[kwhitten@charlesriversschool.org](mailto:kwhitten@charlesriversschool.org)

or 508-785-8213.



# 2023 Distinguished Alumni Award Presentation at Bully Boy Distillers

George Lee '80, a third-generation graduate of Charles River School, has been a steadfast advocate of our school, and we are thrilled to call him one of our own. After CRS, George graduated from Noble and Greenough School in 1984, followed by Middlebury College, where he majored in History. George finished his formal education at The Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania, before taking a job at The Bank of New York.

In 1994 George took over as Partner and Co-Head of Global Technology, Media and Telecom Banking for Goldman Sachs. Twenty-nine years later, George is still at Goldman Sachs, currently serving as Co-Head of the Office of Applied Innovation.

George serves as the Chair of the Board of Trustees at Middlebury College and in May 2020, he gave the Commencement Address for the Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey, CA. Other previous board service includes Global Fight Against AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, the Indelible Mark Foundation, Marin Academy, and Mount Tamalpais School.







George served on an alumni panel discussion in 2011 as part of the CRS Centennial celebration. He was a lead supporter in the *Elevate & Celebrate* campaign and a devoted alumnus during the *Potential Energy* campaign to build the current Activity Center. George's CRS classmate, Peter Hunnewell '80, was killed in a motorcycle accident and George tirelessly worked to engage other alumni from their surrounding classes to raise funds in order to name the lobby in Peter's honor.



**“Charles River gave me a broad perspective on the world, it conferred a certain love of learning that has endured, and it expressed a set of values that have been indelibly important to my career.”**

**— George in his remarks on April 20**





# Alumni News

1942

**PAMELA RICHMOND ORR '42** writes, "I am a graduate of CRS—class of 1942—and still consider my years at CRS as the most valuable and so memorable! I don't know if any of my classmates are still alive, but I am still well and healthy, though a little less 'on the ball' than I once was! I still remember every room in the old school which, in 1940, I think, added classrooms and the dining room, assembly hall! . . . My best wishes to all who teach and all who benefit from that teaching."

1957

**BOB FULLER '57** continues to write. He says "at age 84 I find writing keeps my neurons firing." His short story "Oliver Otis Howard: Maine's first civil rights Leader" appeared in *Discover Maine Magazine's* Fall 2022 issue. He is currently collaborating with an established history writer on a book about the life and times of Melville Weston Fuller, the eighth Chief Justice of the United States 1888–1910. Bob is a descendent of the Chief Justice's cousin.

1968

**[1] AUGUSTUS T. CROCKER JR '68** (Tuck) Flash back to 1962! Augustus "Tuck" Cook shared a photo of his CRS classmates **DANIEL S. GREGORY JR. '68, GEORGE LEWIS JR. '68, WILLIAM TRUESDALE '69, and ANNE SPANG '68** attending his 6th birthday party in February, 1962. He reminisces that "At the time, CRS consisted of the original building and the (then) new building." With the support of the CRS community, our campus has grown throughout the years!

1980

**GEORGE LEE '80** writes, "I was able to visit the CRS campus in April and was instantly reminded of the wonderful times spent there as a child—and was also impressed by the vibrant, happy and engaged climate on campus today. At a CRS event that evening I had the chance to reconnect with friends and classmates; as well as present and former faculty. The experience was a great reminder of old friendships, the special and enduring qualities of Charles River School and the excellent leadership that Gretchen Larkin brought to the School during her years of service."

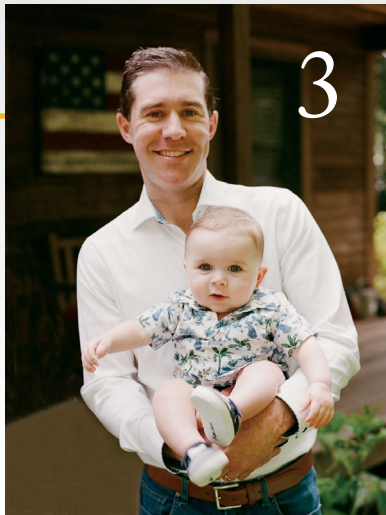
1981

**[2] JULIET THOMPSON HOCHMAN '81** is living the dream in Hood River, Oregon with her husband of 28 years (Steve) and their spastic black lab puppy (Farley). She continues to coach triathletes of all ages and backgrounds around the world while racing herself, winning four World Championship titles last year. Her two sons, Nate (age 25) is a political writer and Thomas (22) is entering his senior year at UVM. You can follow her on instagram @Juliet-hochman. She adds, "please come visit us in paradise!"

## Call for Class Notes

Alumni, we want to hear from you! Send us any updates you would like to share with the CRS community; your classmates and former teachers love to know what is new with you. Please email submissions and photos to [alumni@charlesriverschool.org](mailto:alumni@charlesriverschool.org) by June 1, 2024 to include them in the next issue of *The Current*.





1982

**ZANDER SPRAGUE '82** released his third book, *Why Don't They Cry?: Understanding Your Living Child's Grief*, in February 2023. It was an Amazon #1 new release and a best seller. It has also won multiple awards. Zander is living and working in the San Francisco Bay area. His focus has been on helping to create EPIC lives for companies and people and raising awareness for Sibling loss. He recently started serving as a national board member for The Compassionate Friends as the sibling representative.

1984

**JESSICA THOMPSON SOMOL '84** is now the Chief Development Officer for The Schwartz Center for Compassionate Healthcare in Boston. She and her husband, Mark, still live in Dover and are about to become empty-nesters. Daughters, **CHARLOTTE '17** (majoring in public health at American University) and **EMMA '19**, (freshman at Wesleyan) are both enjoying their summers working at various jobs. Jess recently saw **ASHLEY EDGAR MILLIKEN '84** for some beautiful gravel riding on Vermont's back roads just before the terrible flooding there. **IAN EDGAR '82** was also there. In her spare time, Jess is Chair of the Board for the Bellforge Arts Center in Medfield, MA, a big project to convert a former state hospital campus into a multi-arts center for MetroWest Boston. Come check it out [www.bellforge.org](http://www.bellforge.org). Would love to see any CRS grads from the 80s!

2003

**[3] WILL KANTROWITZ '03** and his wife live in Hoboken, NJ and welcomed Jameson to the family. Congratulations to the Kantrowitz family!

2005

**[4] JACLYN SINESI ZORNIGER '05** and her husband welcomed their son Henry Peter Zorniger who was born on February 19, 2023.

2007

**BRAD SINESI '07** is pursuing a music career under the stage name Elektra Prince and currently resides in the Hollywood Hills. His music can be found on all music streaming platforms, including Spotify and Apple Music. Brad has over 40 singles and one album, ranging from Hip-Hop to Electronic Dance Music.

2010

**[5] JILL DEVEAUX '10** visited campus in June to say farewell to Nurse Carol and Chris Raskin.

2012

**[6] CASEY ROTHSCHILD '12** is a 5 time veteran of NBC's sports competition show *American Ninja Warrior*. In her first appearance on the show, she became the youngest woman at the time to scale the "warped wall" and complete the course. In 2020, Casey founded Queer



Ninjas Unite, a group that gives LGBTQ+ ninjas from across the country a safe space to connect. This year, she is returning to compete in its 15th season which premiered in June.

2014

**[7] EMILY WHITTEN '14** is getting her Master's degree in English at the University of Glasgow after spending a year living locally and working as an Upper School Admissions Counselor at Brimmer and May School. Last fall, she and classmate **JILLIAN ROTHMAN '14** were both at CRS for the annual Secondary School Fair. Jillian is the Assistant Director of Admission at Walnut Hill School, her alma mater.



## IN THE KNOW



2016

**[8] CHARLIE MARCONI '16**, a senior at Wake Forest University, spent the summer of 2022 cycling 4,395 miles across the United States from Seattle, WA to Washington D.C. in support of people with disabilities through an organization called The Ability Experience. Along the way, Charlie and the other cyclists visited 30 different organizations that work with people of all abilities and he was the top fundraiser for his team which collectively raised over \$350,000. Charlie is dedicated to community service and leadership and founded the Wake Forest chapter of Pi Kappa Phi, a service-oriented fraternity.

**[9] NATE WHITTEN '16** was on campus for a brief visit in May following his graduation from the University of Vermont and was happy to run into his Kindergarten buddy, Ari Itzkovits '24. Nate majored in Psychological Science with a minor in Sociology and was engaged in research on the effects of exercise on children with ADHD and played on the UVM Ultimate Frisbee team.

2019

**MARCEL LIU '19** helped propel the Phillips Andover swim team to its 12th NEPSAC Division I Championship this winter. In March, Marcel, a senior at Andover, took first in both the 100 M Butterfly and as a member of the 200 M Medley Relay and placed second in the 100 M Backstroke. The Division I Championships were held at Andover, where Marcel has established multiple school records in swim events.



**CHLOE AND RACHAEL PRATT '19**

**[10]** were the co-valedictorians of the Duxbury High School class of 2023. Their graduation speech utilized an extended metaphor (and a lot of humor) to focus on the similarities and differences between the two of them, as well as their entire graduating class. "When it comes down to it, it is the characteristics we share that create a community, and you will invariably have a connection with the person next to you. When you are in a room full of people you don't know, look for the common root!" Rachael and Chloe were Co-Captains of the DHS Math team for two years and were active members of A World of Difference (sponsored by the Anti-Defamation League), a topic which they have spoken about with CRS middle school students. Both girls are planning on careers involving science and/or math and will be attending the Mellon College of Science at Carnegie Mellon University in the fall.



**[11] IAN TRAVIS '19** was the commencement speaker at Beaver Country Day School's graduation in June, an honor given to the President of the student body. Ian spoke eloquently about the difficulties the Class of '23 endured during Covid shutdowns and how they came together as a class over the years. Ian will be attending the University of Virginia in the fall.

2020

**[12] MARY CATE CLAYTON '20** was on campus in June for CRS's final assembly of the school year where she spoke about how CRS has had a lasting impression on her education. Mary Cate attends Dana Hall School, and is interested in exploring Aeronautical Engineering in the future.



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

**BEATRICE DABNEY ADAMS '45, P'83** died peacefully with her family by her side at her home in Dover, MA on October 7, 2022. A caring mother, inspiring grandmother, devoted wife, talented artist, and empathetic friend are some of the many roles she served so well. Bee attended Beaver Country Day School after CRS, and credited both schools for nurturing her love of art. After attending the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, she was encouraged to apply to the Beaux-Arts de Paris. At the time when she was studying in Paris, Bee enjoyed the lively discussions in cafés and appeared on the cover of French *Elle* magazine, and her detailed ink drawing of the Paris panorama appeared in *Réalités* magazine. Following her divorce from her first husband, Bee moved back to Dover, with her son, **Giannotto Penati '83**, and married widower and lifelong friend, Charles Francis Adams. They shared a love of dogs and enjoyed cruising aboard boats always named Auk. Following Charles' death in 1999, Bee became the caring and thoughtful Trustee of their Charles F. and Beatrice D. Adams Charitable Trust, supporting Downeast Maine and Children's Behavioral Health in Massachusetts. She is survived by her sister, **Elsie Dabney Gordon '42**, son, Giannotto Penati, and his wife, Sharon Huang, and their children, Eilythia and Teo; her half-brother, Fred Dabney; stepdaughters, Abigail Manny and Alison Hagan; and several nieces and nephews.

**EDWARD GREW III '52** graduated from CRS, then attended Phillips Andover and Williams College, majoring in Art History. Edward was able to complete his major after his 3rd year and went to Paris for his 4th studying at the Ecole du Louvre and the Sorbonne. The year in Paris opened him up to a whole new world, and he credited his time in Paris as the reason why he ended up living in Finland. He returned to the United States in 1963 to study Architecture at the University of Pennsylvania and was fortunate to be exposed to the way of thinking of Louis I. Kahn and the group of architects who were drawn to him and taught at the graduate school. Edward earned a traveling Fulbright Fellowship after architecture school and headed to Finland, India, and Japan. After his travels, Edward stayed in Finland with his wife Eva, and worked as an architect. They split their time between Finland and Nice, France. He is survived by brothers **John Grew Jr. '49** and **Nathaniel Grew '50** and sister, **Mary Grew Mendler '51**.

**PENDELTON P. WHITE '42** died in Savannah, Georgia on February 27, 2023. A graduate of Harvard, Pendleton was an Air Force pilot during the Korean War and subsequently flew in the Reserves before retiring from the Air Force after twenty years. For several years,

Pendleton served as Administrator of the Solar and Stellar Physics Division at Harvard's Center for Astrophysics. He had been the Managing Partner of a national executive search firm and served on the Board of Directors/Trustees of The Investment Trust of Boston, Loomis Sayles Funds, Natixis Funds, and AEW Real Estate Income Fund. He also served on the Board of Trustees of The Faulkner Hospital (Boston), Adams House (Boston), Charles River School (also president), The Dover Foundation, and Harvard Club of Savannah, GA. He is survived by Julia, his wife of 65 years; children Pendleton Jr. '72 (Ruth Anne), Henry (Cary), Anne Kelley '71 (Chip); and six grandchildren.

**SALLY SALTONSTALL WILLIS '52 P'88 '89 '92 '94, GP'23 '30** died peacefully surrounded by her family at home on Charlescote Farm in Sherborn, the place she spent her childhood and most of her adult life, on December 12, 2022. Her formal education after CRS was at Chatham Hall in VA, and Bradford College in Haverhill, MA. She subsequently honed her administrative skills at Katharine Gibbs College in Boston. In early 1960, Sally worked to get Henry Cabot Lodge elected as a write-in candidate for President on the New Hampshire Republican primary ballot. Lodge was subsequently chosen by candidate Richard Nixon as his Vice Presidential running mate at the 1960 Republican National Convention in Chicago, where Sally served as a page. There she met Edward Brooke, who was running for Massachusetts Secretary of State, and promptly joined his campaign staff in his unsuccessful 1960 run for state-wide office. She worked on Brooke's successful campaign for Massachusetts Attorney General in 1962 and had the opportunity to address the 1966 Massachusetts Republican Convention to second Brooke's nomination for United States Senate. Later that year, Sally joined Brooke's staff in Washington D.C., and became a trusted aide and adviser who was well-liked and respected by other Senators and their staffs alike. In June 1972, Sally and Dudley Willis were married on Charlescote Farm and their first child, Dudley, Jr., was born in the fall of 1973. Sally's new priorities were to return to the Farm to raise their children, care for her aging parents, get her fingers in the dirt again, and enjoy life to its fullest. She was an avid tennis player and a regular spectator and cheerleader at her children's athletic events from youth sports to college competitions. Her true passion, however, was the Boston Red Sox. She is survived by her husband of 50 years, Dudley Willis; four children and their spouses, **Dudley, Jr. '88** and Heather Willis, **Christopher '89** and Pamela Willis, **David '92** and Kristyn Willis, and **Deborah '94** and Peter Dowling; ten grandchildren: **Duds '23**, Westy, and **Sunny '30** Willis, Gussie and Roxy Willis, Annabelle, Sydney, and Austen Willis, and George and Sally Dowling; and numerous cousins, nieces, and nephews.





Spirits were high on Sports Day! From left, Former Head of School Gretchen Larkin, Jeremy Ridlon '18, Sophie Ridlon '15, Katherine Jackson '15, Nurse Carol Ahearn



Alumni joined the celebration for departing faculty on June 8. From left: Ben Jackson '19, Rachael Pratt '19, Chloe Pratt '19, Mary Cate Clayton '20, and Maddie Li '19



Showing their colors on Sports Day are, from left, Leslie Jackson Judge '91 P'24 '26, Third Grade Teacher Kristin Jayne P' 08, '11, Literacy Specialist Amy Lisbon Branton '95 P'26 '28, and Will Willis '88 P'23 '30

# Alumni on Campus

We were excited to see so many alumni returning to campus on various occasions this spring! We welcome and encourage graduates and parents of graduates to join us at events. Please keep these dates in mind:

## CRS Fair

**Saturday**

October 21, 2023

## Winter Festival

**Friday**

December 15, 2023

## May Day

**Friday**

May 3, 2024

## Sports Day

**Friday**

May 24, 2024

## Graduation

**Tuesday**

June 11, 2024

If you'd like to plan a visit to CRS to see what's happening on campus, please reach out to Director of Development Emily Walberg ([ewalberg@charlesriverschool.org](mailto:ewalberg@charlesriverschool.org)).



Kamryn Kerr '18  
and Jeremy Ridlon  
'18 reconnect



Members of the Class of 2022 gathered for dinner and to attend the 8th Grade Musical.



# The Charles River School Annual Fund

The Charles River School Annual Fund is the community-driven fund that fills the gap not covered by tuition and endowment income. Our school relies on the Annual Fund each year to create opportunities for our masterful teachers to move their curriculum forward, empowering our students to embrace their full potential.

Making a gift every year to CRS has a direct impact on our students, and is a powerful show of commitment to progressive education. Visit [www.charlesriverschool.org/support-crs](http://www.charlesriverschool.org/support-crs) to make your gift today.





**The CURRENT Spring 2023**

Charles River School  
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Dover, MA 02030  
[www.charlesriverschool.org](http://www.charlesriverschool.org)

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**CHARLES RIVER**  
SCHOOL

NONPROFIT  
ORGANIZATION  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
GALLERY



**Not just  
preparing for  
the future.  
Preparing  
to make it their  
own.**

**CRS students thrive because of our intentional cultivation of their individual academic success and enrichment as well as their social/emotional development. With inspiration in and out of the classroom, our students enthusiastically apply knowledge to new situations and become resourceful learners.**

**This is the Charles River  
School point of view.**

[www.charlesriverschool.org](http://www.charlesriverschool.org)