

the CURRENT

THE MAGAZINE OF CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL | FALL 2025

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Out of the
Classroom,
Into the
World



CHARLES RIVER
SCHOOL

BE CURIOUS. BE CONFIDENT. BE KNOWN.

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Out of the Classroom, Into the World

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ON THE COVER

The Class of 2025 embarked on the inaugural CRS Civil Rights Trip to Alabama and Georgia this spring. A highlight was walking over the historic Edmund Pettus Bridge.

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 creating a school community in which everyone is welcomed, recognized, and valued both as individuals and as members of the Charles River School family. Through our culturally responsive teaching practices and authentic learning experiences we provide for our students inside and outside of the classroom, Charles River School is dedicated 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

The Little School That Could

When I was five years-old, my favorite book was *The Little Engine That Could*.

Watty Piper's story of a little blue switcher engine that had never been over the mountain before, but answered the call to action to help the children on the other side, really spoke to me. As a little boy, I begged my mother to read it again and again. This spring, she sent a new copy to my son Max for his fifth birthday.

When I was a middle school teacher in Los Angeles, I read *The Little Engine That Could* on the first day of class to students in my eighth grade filmmaking elective to teach them how to tell a story. Piper's classic has all the elements:

1. An ordinary character called to do extraordinary things.
2. High stakes. If the train doesn't get over the mountain, then the children on the other side "won't have toys to play with or good food to eat."
3. A universal theme. Built on "I think I can"—*The Little Engine That Could* teaches children the importance of optimism and believing in oneself even when a task seems daunting, and it demonstrates the value of helping others.

This classic wasn't exactly new when my mother read it to me in 1984. It was published in 1930 and was based on a short story published in 1906 called *Thinking One Can*. (Just five years before Charles River School was founded.)

This summer, as I was reading the book to Max, I realized that I've had a relationship with this book for 40 years. With any timeless work of art, we make new connections as we age, and this time, reading about the Little Blue Engine, I made a new connection, and I couldn't help but be reminded of Charles River School.

Each four-year-old PreK student is that Little Blue (or Gold) Engine. They learn to write the alphabet, how to practice taking turns, how to use their voice in front of the whole school in their first Sharing Assembly, and they climb to the top of their own mountain—the rope web on the playground.

The tasks are daunting! Can they do it? You bet!

The book makes me think about our world-class faculty. Every day, CRS teachers work in the service of children and the stakes are high. At first, that optimistic voice that acts as the chorus of the book belongs to the teachers. It starts with, "*I think you can . . . I think you can . . . I think you can.*" But as the children feel known and loved by their teachers, and the classroom conditions they have created allow children to be vulnerable to new learning, the kids go for it! And, before we know it, the voice goes from external to internal. You is replaced with I.

When I look back at all we collectively accomplished last year, I see our whole school as that Little Blue Engine. We chugged up mountain after mountain, ticking off dreams listed on our strategic plan with a confident outlook and a belief in our mission and community.

This year's issue of *The Current* tells the story of our travels, and 2024–2025 was a year of new mountains to ascend. The Class of 2025 climbed the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama on our first eighth grade Civil Rights Trip—one of four new overnight experiences for our fifth–eighth graders.



We introduced a brand new math program from PreK-eighth grade—*Illustrative Math*—to ensure coherence and continuity across grades, promote equity through standards-aligned instruction, support teacher collaboration and, most importantly, to more effectively support and challenge each child.

We built a new Community Garden—an organic maker space where curiosity, sweat equity, and service grow together like the Three Sisters, and the vegetables planted by students and community members of all ages are donated weekly to the Medfield Food Cupboard and Dover Council on Aging.

We designed a new comprehensive marketing campaign based on our core values, piloted a new model for faculty growth and evaluation, and then doubled the professional development budget and introduced a travel grant for faculty and staff thanks to the generosity of the Grade 8 Gift for Faculty.

We had a long list of things we thought we could do . . . and we did them. At our little school, just shy of 200

students, it takes an “everybody in, nobody out” mindset to make these changes come to life. The pages that follow are a testament to all the teaching, learning, and volunteering that powered us up all the mountains on our range. And I’m filled with gratitude for the collective efforts of this community.

As educators and parents, it is our chosen collective assignment to raise confident, responsible, high-character, selfless young people. In an uncertain and fast-changing world, there will always be steep challenges for us. At Charles River School, we will continue to attack those obstacles with a sense of purpose even when faced with challenges we have never seen before.

In other words, at our small but mighty school, we will continue to do hard things well. And I don’t just think we can do them. *I know we can.* 🐉

With gratitude,

Gabe



1



SNAPSHOTS

A GLIMPSE OF OUR YEAR TOGETHER

Our Otters have been busy!

- 1 Athletic seasons were capped off with spirited caregivers and faculty versus student games (pictured: basketball)
- 2 7th and 8th grade lit up the stage in our production of *Beauty and the Beast Jr.*
- 3 Our youngest learners cameode in the production as sheep in a number with Erin Grimm '25 as Belle
- 4 Fourth graders celebrated months of research on West Africa with folktales, proverbs, drumming, and dancing at the Griot Gala
- 5 Hundreds of guests came out for May Day, a favorite CRS tradition
- 6 Students created a Welcome Otters tape mural to kick off the school year with Art Teacher Mr. Dana

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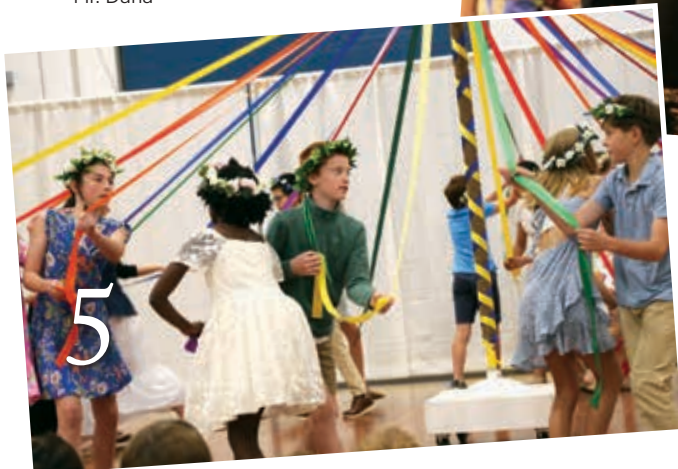
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6



CAMPUS HAPPENINGS



Model UN Achievements

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, the Model United Nations Club participated in several conferences. Otters earned many accolades including best delegate, best position paper, and best negotiator.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Days of Action Food Drive for Needham Food Pantry

STUDENTS IN GRADES 3, 4, AND 5, working in partnership with our Community Association, organized a school-wide food drive for the Needham Food Pantry to provide needed items including pasta, jelly, and granola bars. Students created flyers and videos to market the drive, did the math to gather data on their collections, and loaded up a van's worth (689 pounds to be exact) of food!



Wildfire Simulation

AS PART OF THEIR STUDY of weather and climate, grade 6 students learned in math and science class about wildfires. Using Concord Consortium's online Wildfire Explorer simulator (pictured), students modified terrain, vegetation, wind, and drought levels to see the impact on fire intensity and rate of spread. They also got to meet with a wildfire firefighter who works on a helitack team in Idaho and get their questions answered about controlled burning, wildfire causes, and training for this type of work answered. Students then connected their learning to the California wildfires and wrote research papers.



Mint Mobiles

GRADE 5 SCIENTISTS completed their Simple Machine Unit with a wheel and axle challenge. Each student created their own "Mint Mobile" with carts and wheels made of mints. They tested their creations, filled with 10 pennies, in the Playbarn for speed and accuracy on an inclined plane.

Middle School Research Project with Wellesley College and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

SANA KHAN, A STUDENT AT WELLESLEY COLLEGE, partnered with CRS on a research study with the help of sixth and seventh grade students. The research involves working with a neuroscience lab at MIT to support a study on vision development and the brain, investigating visual motor abilities, perception, and acuity. Tests were conducted to study grasping aperture and matching and identifying objects with and without blurred vision. Working with Sana, students helped the study to bridge the gap of understanding about the visual grasping capacity of 7–13 year olds and got a behind-the-scenes look at an active study. Thank you to Science Teacher Tara Jennings for bringing this study to CRS!





PreK/K Class Pet Election

TO LEARN ABOUT THE PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION, PreK/K students held their own election for a class stuffed pet along with their Middle School Buddies. Students experienced a voting precinct first-hand as both voters and poll workers. Members of the entire community, adults and students alike, had the chance to cast their vote.

Winter Cheer

FOR THEIR MLK DAY OF ACTION PROJECT, grades PreK–2 organized a winter cheer walk around Dover. Students learned songs and made art to spread joy in the spirit of MLK's beloved community. Students visited the Dover Town Hall, local businesses, the police station, library, and the post office.





MathCounts

THE CRS MATHCOUNTS CLUB, led by Math Specialist and Coordinator Sarah Wong, competed in the MathCounts Metrowest Chapter competition in the fall and performed with skill, speed, and precision. Our Mathletes worked tirelessly all year to develop above grade-level math skills and applications.

Faculty Appreciation Week

THE COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION organized a full week of thoughtful activities in February to show their gratitude to the CRS faculty and staff. Caregivers covered recess duty and made a delicious breakfast complete with family recipes. There were chair massages, a coffee and tea bar, appreciation stations, and more!



Moving Forward Together

State of the School & Strategic Plan Update

Board Treasurer James McElligott P'25 '27 '30 presents at the State of the School



Introduction by **Kate Paglia**, Board President

A **S PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES** at Charles River School, I'm often asked to explain the role and responsibilities of the Board. At this past January's State of the School address, I was glad to answer that question more openly with the CRS community. We shared an overview of the Board's role, a financial update, and highlights from the launch of our new strategic plan. While much of our work happens behind the scenes, the Board of Trustees exists to ensure that CRS remains true to its mission while evolving to meet the needs of today's learners and tomorrow's world.

That's why I'm proud to introduce this update on *Forward Together*, our five-year strategic plan. Created in collaboration with school leadership and community voices, this plan sets a bold course for our future while remaining deeply grounded in the values that make CRS so special. Each of its four pillars reflects a commitment to intentional, mission-aligned growth: in how we teach, how we engage as a community, how we care for people and programs, and how we share our story with the wider world.

One of the most exciting first-year initiatives is the adoption of the *Illustrative Math* program—an example of the kind of forward-thinking, research-based change the strategic plan empowers. Thanks to thoughtful piloting and strong faculty leadership, CRS is now implementing a math program that both challenges students and prepares them for future coursework—while also helping them truly understand and enjoy the subject. This work reflects the kind of dynamic learning environment the Board is proud to champion.

I invite you to read on and learn more about the progress we've made—and what's coming next. The work of the strategic plan is ongoing, and we're grateful to be moving *Forward Together* with such an engaged and passionate community.

CONTINUED

YEAR 1 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

2024–2025 Recap

- New math program, Illustrative Math, learning and pilot year (see spotlight for details on page 12!)
- New faculty evaluation and growth model implementation
- Experiential learning expanded with four new overnight trips for 5th–8th grade (learn more beginning on page 18)
- New Financial Aid policy
- Doubled professional development budget and introduced travel grant to support retaining and recruiting expert faculty (thanks to the Grade 8 Gift—read more about our development work in *The Reservoir*)
- Completed messaging survey, strategy, and designed marketing campaign to roll out in fall of 2025

ON DECK FOR YEAR 2

2025–2026 School Year and Beyond

- Full implementation of Illustrative Math curriculum
- Vertical integration of curriculum
- Individual enrichment, learning opportunities, and strategic partnerships planning
- Creation of Alumni Council
- Reimagining faculty compensation and benefits committee work begins
- Review Auxiliary programs
- Complete Campus Master Plan
- Complete Feasibility Study
- Launch Community Ambassador Program



Sarah Fishman, Grade 4 Co-Teacher, and Billy Beauzile, PreK-3 PE Teacher, work to solve a math problem together using manipulatives at a faculty professional development session with consultants from Stronger Math



Scarlett Arnone '28 and Sammy Repoff '28 create sets of partial products together during an IM lesson

State of the School & Strategic Plan Update

Spotlight on Illustrative Math

In the 2024–2025 school year, Math Specialist and Coordinator Sarah Wong, in partnership with consultants from Stronger Math, led the piloting of our new math curriculum, Illustrative Math (IM) to more effectively challenge and support each student. We also adopted Peter Liljedahl's *Building Thinking Classrooms* framework for how we teach math, harnessing the power of research-based practices to allow teachers to implement more complex, rich, and engaging math challenges with deep critical thinking, problem solving, and real world applications. PreK–5 classrooms authentically integrated the new curriculum. We held several professional development sessions for all PreK–8 faculty and staff and also broke into grade-level small groups to prepare for our full implementation.

“This year in fifth grade we immersed ourselves in teaching Illustrative Math for the entire school year. I found that the length of each unit allowed students enough time to gain mastery of content. The curriculum does a good job of building off knowledge from prior units which was very helpful when explaining a concept to a student. I liked the variety of activities and the intentional use of whole group, partner, and small group work. Throughout the year I found that students grew more comfortable with conversations about math, explaining their thinking while engaging in low-floor high-ceiling tasks and sharing problem solving strategies.”

— Rachel Miller, Grade 5 Co-Teacher

The IM framework teaches math as a story, with each lesson leading into the next. A typical class has four phases: warm-up, activities, lesson synthesis, and cool down. Students study concepts and procedures deeply and then consolidate and apply what they learned.

Goals achieved in Year 1 include:

- Consistency of routine: students know what to expect in each class
- Intentional spiraling: warm ups are used to activate background knowledge before adding new content
- Time spent on topic leads to increased comfort and understanding
- Differentiation built into routines and extensions

Read the full strategic plan by visiting charlesriversschool.org/forwardtogether.

Woven Together, Stronger Forever

A look behind-the-scenes of our 2024–2025 community mural titled *Woven Together, Stronger Forever* designed by Art Teacher Noelle Pierce.

Kicking off the school year with our Buddy assembly, all students, faculty, and staff had the chance to decorate their own special strip of recycled material in a color of their choosing using drawings, words, or symbols that were meaningful to them. Students then spent time in art class carefully weaving the pieces together, leaving space at the ends to continue to expand. From there, Grade 5 students worked with Art Teacher Aaron Dana to create the custom lettering to accompany the piece. The mural showcases the strength of our CRS community when we work, play, and stand together. 🧡



Student Creations

A Flock of Color

CRS was honored to welcome Norberto Fabian Xuana from *The Dancing Chickens of Ventura Fabian: The Visiting Mexican Artists Program*. Students experienced a multicultural, bilingual arts presentation designed to share and celebrate the craft of Oaxacan wood carving. After his presentation, Norberto worked with students in Grades 1 and 2 in the art room to create their own painted chickens.

They learned three painting techniques: sponge, airbrush effect, and dotting. Norberto discussed the importance of practice to control the tools with a “combination of mind, heart, and hands.” 🧡



Tick-Tock Tech

As part of our 6th-grade technology curriculum, students engage in a design project to create custom laser-cut wooden clocks. The project begins with students sketching multiple drafts on paper and digitally modeling their ideas using vector design software. Students then use the laser cutter to cut and engrave their clock faces in cardboard is a rough draft, and make adjustments based on teacher and peer feedback. Their final piece is cut on wood, sanded down, and stained or painted. After assembling the clock components, each student brought home a fully functional, personalized wall clock. 🧡





Introducing the Role of Director of Community Engagement

KAT WHITTEN P'14 '16 is Charles River School personified. She is curious, she creatively solves problems big and small daily, and she approaches every interaction with compassion and confidence. She understands what it means to be academically excellent and knows that our students remain Otters long after they graduate.

Kat is a bright spot, friend, and resource to many segments of our community. You can find her all over on our 16-acre campus (and beyond) making connections and modeling joy - greeting families at drop off, harvesting snap peas in the community garden, visiting an alum off-campus, cheering on a student at their track meet, or supporting a colleague through a challenge while simultaneously covering recess duty.

"Kat is a committed team member, and makes every community member on and off campus feel important and valued," shared Steve Trust, Director of Technology. "I admire her unparalleled work ethic and the great sense of joy and humor that she brings to her interactions."

When Head of School Gabe Burnstein decided to create a new role for CRS in the summer of 2024, the Director of Community Engagement, Kat was the perfect person for the job.

"One of the greatest joys of my job is helping to facilitate connections between members of our community," Kat reflected. "Whether it's exploring off-campus partnerships to enhance our academic program, helping a recent graduate network to find the perfect internship, or creating opportunities for alumni and past parents to reconnect with one another, I'm continually in awe of the power of the relationships that are built at CRS."

Kat joined CRS in June of 2007 and has served our community in several roles, including Assistant Director of Development and Director of Admissions. Her new role lets Kat lean into her strengths and expand the work of Charles River School, working in partnership with our entire community—on Old Meadow Road and across the globe.

As Director of Community Engagement, Kat works closely with the Development Office to collaborate with and connect our alumni, past parents, and friends of CRS. She also works tirelessly to expand our community and create new service learning opportunities and partnerships that enhance our curriculum with external organizations near and far. She strives to align Charles River School's efforts to be more intentional in how we build, nurture, and sustain our community as well as connect meaningfully with more members of our diverse world.

"Kat is a CRS Otter, quite literally," said Julie Weeden, Middle School Director and French Teacher. "She is CRS's greatest advocate and most loyal fan."

A few highlights from the 2024–2025 school year include:

- Members of the Charles River School Class of 1955 and their spouses returned to campus for their 70th reunion.
- Past parents, alumni, and former faculty gathered for lunch in Dover, hosted by Stephanie Vitzthum P'07 '09.
- The CRS Archives in Founders House was created and dedicated volunteers gathered to organize and expand the newly created space (pictured).
- Dozens of letters, photos, and care packages were mailed to alumni.
- New community partnerships were established, including Cocotree Kids (read more on page 24) and Natick Community Organic Farm.
- Kat served as a liaison for the new CRS Community Garden, helping students, faculty, and families get involved in the planting and harvesting of this campus resource.

Kat (kwhitten@charlesriverschool.org) is always looking for opportunities to connect and would love to hear from you! 🐾

ABOVE: Archives volunteer group. FRONT ROW, FROM LEFT: Gabe Burnstein P'30 '30 '34, Head of School; Carol Lisbon P'95 '98, GP'26 '28; Linda Fenton P'90, Former Director of Development; Kat Whitten P'14 '16, Director of Community Engagement; Amy Walsh P'28 '31, Director of Development. **BACK ROW, FROM LEFT:** Judi Quagliaroli P'86 '88; Kris Vanin P'07; Yvette Hochberg P'19; Stephanie Vitzthum P'07 '07 '09; Carol Ahearn, Former School Nurse; North Lyman Cunningham '60, P'88 '90; Deirdre Levine P'20; Cheryl Marconi P'16; Chris Raskin P'07, Former 7/8 Social Studies Teacher.



Emily Whitten '14, Mary Cate Clayton '20, and Chloe Pratt '19 catch up at Elizabeth Clayton's farewell celebration



Nicolo Gaybor '23, Caroline Webb '23, Kidder Brady '24, Lila Kangethe '24, Dom Culbreath '24, Olivia Colas '22 celebrate the Class of 2025 at their graduation reception



Quinn Kennedy '24, and Emma Gehan '24 enjoy a favorite playground spot after final assembly

Alumni on Old Meadow Road

We love seeing alumni and past parents return to campus!
CRS will always be your home.

Add our 2025-2026 upcoming events to your calendar!

Friday Night Lights vs. Dedham Country Day
Friday, Oct. 3, 2025

CRS Fair
Saturday
Oct. 25, 2025

Winter Festival
Friday
Dec. 19, 2025

May Day
Friday
May 1, 2026

Sports Day
Friday
May 22, 2026

If you'd like to plan a visit to CRS to see the latest on campus, please reach out to Kat Whitten, Director of Community Engagement (kwhitten@charlesriversschool.org).

Alumni reliving memories at the CRS Fair

Liam Kerr '24 embraces his former teacher Julie Weeden





THE GREAT MASSACHUSETTS State Flag Redesign Project

By **Jordy Hertzberg**, *Grades 1 & 2 Co-Teacher*

A **GREAT ESSENTIAL QUESTION** can drive a theme for an entire year. Students approach the question from a wide range of perspectives and inroads, seeking to understand and uncover. For our first and second grade students in the Highlands and the Coast, this past year revolved around a big question: *"How do communities thrive?"*

We first examined ourselves, exploring our family and school communities deeply. Then, we began to look outward and explore the world around us – diving into the concept of geographic community. This focus started by learning all about Massachusetts and New England. What is our state and region known for? What is the land like? Who was living here before Europeans arrived in the 1600s? A great deal of research and discussion of students' individual knowledge led to shared classroom understandings.



Lucas Levine '32



Jaylynn Keegan '31



Enter the Great Massachusetts State Flag Redesign Project!

(AND EVEN MORE QUESTIONS)

STEP ONE

Get to Know Our Current State Flag

Students in the One/Two combined classrooms—the Highlands and the Coast—worked to carefully draw an accurate copy of the Massachusetts state flag. Using their observation skills and employing plenty of patience, they instinctively expressed their curiosity—noticing, among other things, how “odd” the flag looked with weapons on it.

- *Does our state flag represent what we know about Massachusetts?*

STEP TWO

What Do We Know about Massachusetts? What Are We Proud of?

Working in small groups and as a class, students began by brainstorming what they already knew, then deepened their understanding through research—exploring state history, mottos, geography, cuisine, sports, and more.

- *What are the state flower and state bird? What types of food are most common? What sports teams do we love? Did you know that chocolate chip cookies were invented in East Walpole by Ruth Graves Wakefield?*

STEP THREE

Multiple Perspectives

- *What is a point-of-view?*

Students were now ready to think about our state flag in a new way, beginning with a history lesson on what the symbols were meant to represent when the flag was initially designed in 1908 and updated in 1971. Students learned that the intention of the flag was to celebrate the American Revolution and freedom from the tyranny of King George III. After watching a 2019 news report by GBH that shares the perspective of some Native American groups, it was clear that the impact today is that the flag is hurtful. Students all agreed: It needs updating.

- *How can we take action to repair this issue of injustice?*

STEP FOUR

Design Our Own Flags

Students narrowed in on the parts of Massachusetts and its communities that resonated with them most. They began sketching rough drafts of their own designs including phrases, images, symbols, and details that felt meaningful and important.

- *What would the Massachusetts state flag look like if it better reflected our own values and what we love about our state? How do we want people to feel when they see the state flag?*

STEP FIVE

Share our Flags with the Community!

From a sharing assembly to May Day, our students felt proud to share their visions for flags that are inclusive, welcoming, and full of hope and love.

And when they found out that they would get to present their flags in the classroom to State Senator Becca Rausch, co-signer of the bill to update the MA state flag and representative of a number of our school community's towns, they nearly burst with excitement!

The visit was profoundly memorable, and our students spoke with confidence about their hopes and dreams. Senator Rausch was highly impressed with what our students had to say, and one Highlander commented that they “felt like we accomplished something” that morning.

This moment is a big part of why we do this project—the sense of pride and accomplishment that comes with students finding their voices and speaking up for justice. While understanding our varied geographic communities was the initial driver behind this project, the deeper lessons our students learned revolve around what it means to be a member of multiple communities: what it looks like to stand up for others, what it means to be a leader, and how each of us can contribute to help our communities thrive. 🌱

CRS introduced a series of dynamic experiential learning field trips designed to deepen engagement and expand real-world connections for students in grades 5–8.

Out of the Classroom, Into the World

Exploring the tidal basins during the Marine BioBlitz project in Acadia National Park

THE 16 ACRES THAT MAKE UP CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL'S CAMPUS provide endless opportunities for student learning. Each day, students, teachers, and specialists lead with curiosity in the classroom, in the Wetlands, in the tech lab, and on the playground.

In the 2024–2025 school year, CRS took a bold step forward in experiential education, launching a series of overnight field trips for students in grades 5 through 8. These immersive learning journeys were designed not just to enrich academics, but to ignite curiosity, build independence, and deepen our students' understanding of themselves and the world around them. Moving forward, the trips will be a cornerstone experience for our older students for years to come.

“As our students get older, their educational world needs to grow with them,” Head of School Gabe Burnstein explained. “We expect our graduates to teach the real world about the values they learned here at CRS and to make every space a place to belong for others. And we expect our graduates to treat the world as a sharing assembly—to share their voices with confidence and to support and applaud others with compassion,” he continued.

Rooted in our mission to empower students to “know themselves, understand others, and shape the future of our diverse world,” the new trips are thoughtfully aligned with grade-level curriculum and rich with opportunities for discovery. Each trip is designed to challenge students

socially, emotionally, and intellectually, while reinforcing the community values that define CRS.

Just as important, these new experiences are accessible to all. Thanks to support from our Annual Fund, there is no additional cost to families. Our “everybody in, nobody out” philosophy ensures that every child has a seat on the bus—or the plane.

At Charles River School, field trips are important experiences for every student. The journey begins in PreK, with local excursions for our youngest learners, and builds in both scope and substance year after year, culminating with eighth graders arriving at Logan Airport at 4:30am to board their flight to Georgia.

Early Childhood and Elementary Years: Building a Foundation

In grades PreK–4, field trips enhance the classroom experience with hands-on exploration. Students' classrooms expand to places including the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, the Greater Boston Chinese Cultural Association, the Plimoth Patuxet Museums, local farms, and the Noanet Woodlands. They learn from historians, scientists, artists, and one another. These early experiences make use of the many local resources Greater Boston has to offer, and lay the groundwork for inquiry, empathy, and wonder.

Grade 5: Farm School

ATHOL, MASSACHUSETTS

THE FIFTH-GRADE YEAR BEGINS with an immersive two-night trip to Farm School, where students trade classroom routines for farm chores and uncover unexpected joy in the process. Experiential learning at a working farm includes milking cows, feeding pigs, blacksmithing, caring for horses, gardening, composting, and cooking. A highlight is an evening outdoors together, complete with s'mores and stories around the campfire.

Historically, our seventh and eighth graders began their school year with Farm School. Our new progression of overnight trips starting in grade 5 is the perfect way for our soon-to-be middle school students to carry on the tradition while allowing our older students to travel further as they grow developmentally and socially. Reflecting on last September's trip, one fifth grader shared "I had so much fun with my friends and learned so much. I feel more confident about the rest of the school year now!"

Back at school, students wrote about cherished Farm School micro moments.

"We walked to the anvil, our gloves and leather aprons on, with the hammer and hot metal ready to go. I saw the anvil with the pointy side and the square side. It was a dark metallic color that looked just like the one from Minecraft. I hammered the piece of metal against the anvil, hearing, clang after clang after clang, feeling beads of sweat roll down my neck. My leather apron moved in rhythm with my swings. The hammering vibrated my whole body, it felt like I was hammering the whole world in a steady rhythm. Hammering the metal filled my body with excitement and happiness."

— *An excerpt on blacksmithing from Luca Perim Collis '28*



Hez Gregoire '28
learns to milk a cow



Students and science
teacher Annie Kenney
study gardening

Grade 6: Acadia National Park

WINTER HARBOR, MAINE

SIXTH GRADERS TRAVEL TO MAINE'S SCHOODIC PENINSULA to take part in the Schoodic Education Adventure (SEA), a National Park Service program that brings their work in the classroom to life. Over three days, students explore tidal basins, wetlands, and forests while contributing to real scientific research.

The trip serves as a capstone for their science curriculum, which focuses on water systems, ecology, and climate change. It's also an interdisciplinary experience: students reflect on their findings through writing and art in Humanities class.

One highlight was the Marine Bioblitz project, where students conducted chemistry tests and discovered eleven different species. Their excitement was contagious:

"I found a baby crab!"

"I have a kelp tail!"

"I caught a shrimp!"

Surrounded by tall Conifer trees, students forge deep bonds with each other and their advisors, gaining a new appreciation for nature.

When they returned home, sixth graders wrote "This I believe" reflections on their experience.

"On our trip to Acadia National Park, I think that our learning was boosted because we were in a new learning environment, it wasn't like our typical classes at school. A moment from our trip that stood out to me was during our soil science program. The air was cool as we walked in the shade. I pulled my sweatshirt a little bit tighter. My partner and I collected data and ran tests (pH, depth, and temperature) so that we could understand more about the earth beneath us."

— *Darian Hong '27*





Seeing
The Outsiders
on Broadway

Grade 7: More than Dinner and a Show

NEW YORK CITY

SEVENTH-GRADE STUDENTS TAKE TO THE STREETS OF NYC on a two-day field trip. This past year, they explored the halls of the American Museum of Natural History (including spotting an otter display) and spent a morning learning about the Rogarshevskys and the Baldizzis, a Jewish family and an Italian family who became neighbors in the “Under One Roof” exhibit at the Tenement Museum. The trip also included a guided “Immigrant New York” walking tour through Chinatown, the historic Jewish East Side, and Little Italy neighborhoods.

One student commented, “It was interesting seeing all the different lifestyles and cultures in NYC, how people lived and made it work with what they had.”

A major highlight of the trip was dinner at Gayle’s Broadway restaurant, where servers sing and dance through dinner, followed by a trip to Jacob’s Theater to see *The Outsiders* on Broadway. The musical is an adaptation of the classic S.E. Hinton novel of the same name, which seventh graders read as part of their English curriculum. Students spent a significant amount of time analyzing and discussing the novel’s core themes of segregated communities, socioeconomic privilege, and prejudice.

Favorite moments of the show included the rain on stage, the pyrotechnics, and the incredible performers. One student commented, “The acting made it feel so real! I don’t usually like musicals, but I loved this one.”



Grade 8: Civil Rights Trip to the American South

STOPS IN ATLANTA, GEORGIA; SELMA, ALABAMA; AND MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA

THE INAUGURAL CIVIL RIGHTS TRIP WAS AN IMPACTFUL EXPERIENCE for the Class of 2025 and will serve as a hallmark of the curriculum for years to come. The four-day, three-night field trip offered students the chance to engage firsthand with American history in a deeply meaningful way as they visited pivotal historical sites and heard firsthand stories from those who shaped the movement.

“The trip is a profoundly important experience for our students,” said 7/8 social studies teacher Tessa Steniert-Evoy. “To truly grasp the significance of the Civil Rights Movement, you have to stand where history unfolded.”

The work to prepare for this trip began in seventh grade. Students read many texts including *Sugar Changed the World*, which explores the historical roots of forced labor and its impact on global societies. They participated in the Witness Stones project, where students researched and commemorated the life of Cato, an enslaved individual from Dedham, Massachusetts. They read John Lewis’ graphic novel *March*, and took part in a multidisciplinary unit centered around Bryan Stevenson’s Equal Justice Initiative. They studied key figures and the

strategies employed during the Civil Rights Movement, from the legal battles to nonviolent protests, and dove into voting rights history, systemic injustice, and the ongoing pursuit of a more equitable society.

This intentionally detailed preparation allows students to arrive on site with the historical context and emotional readiness to fully engage. Stops on the trip offered students a personal connection to history. In Atlanta, they toured Martin Luther King Jr.’s childhood neighborhood, and dined at the historic Paschal’s Restaurant, a common meeting place for civil rights leaders. Students even got to talk with Eby Marshall Slack, a historian and original staffer at Paschal’s.

In Selma, students spent an afternoon with two renowned civil rights activists and foot soldiers who shared their lived experiences. They explored Foot Soldiers Park with Barbara Barge, a lifelong resident of Selma, and stood with her on the patch of ground where marchers met on the day that became known as Bloody Sunday.

Then, students met with JoAnne Bland. JoAnn participated in the 1965 Voting Rights March with Dr. King and shared about her experience as an 11-year-old student who joined her older sister, Lynda,

Eleanor Haber '25, Lauren McElligott '25, Tessa Steinert-Evoy, 7/8 social studies teacher, Wesley Pham '25, and Theo Lee '25 take in the Southern Poverty Law Center's Civil Rights Memorial





Dinner at Dreamland BBQ in Montgomery

on Bloody Sunday. She marched from Selma over the Edmund Pettus Bridge to the state capitol in Montgomery with leaders like John Lewis of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and Hosea Williams of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

JoAnn posed three important questions to our eighth graders:

“What would you add to this world? What would you take out? What would you build?”

Our students walked two by two across the Edmund Pettus Bridge, retracing the steps of those who had marched before them, silently reflecting on JoAnn’s questions.

The trip continued in Montgomery with visits to The Legacy Museum, The Southern Poverty Law Center’s Civil Rights Memorial, and The National Memorial for Peace and Justice—where students were moved by its stark beauty and somber message. One student reflected:

“Its simplicity makes it more effective in conveying the message about the injustice of just how many people were killed by lynching. I feel like the museum is for the living, but the memorial is for the dead.”

Upon return to CRS, eighth graders shared their reflections with faculty and staff and presented to the wider community on May Day. It was abundantly clear to everyone in the room that their trip had made an indelible mark, leaving our graduates better prepared to shape the future with confidence and compassion.

Our ever-changing world offers students unlimited access to information, available at their fingertips at all times. At CRS, we are committed to creating opportunities for students to explore the larger world first-hand, make personal observations, ask meaningful questions that spark deep reflection, and share what they have learned with others, not only in the moment, but throughout their lives. 🐼



**Rosie Sass '25
reflecting at The
National Memorial
for Peace & Justice**

Visiting The National Memorial for Peace and Justice



Barbara Barge, Civil Rights activist, and Jonah Mathew '25

Read the daily blogs from the Civil Rights trip at charlesriversschool.org/civil-rights-trip

Learning Leadership Through Service

An Interview with Catherine Maloy, Executive Director of Cocotree Kids

BEGINNING IN THE 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR, CRS began a new and important relationship with Natick-based nonprofit Cocotree Kids. The mission of Cocotree Kids is to provide new underwear to underserved youth across Massachusetts for their dignity and security. One in three children in Massachusetts experiences clothing insecurity and their access to underwear is even more limited as it cannot be donated, even lightly used.

Our partnership began when Laura Hahn P'27, a Board member of Cocotree Kids, came to speak with Middle School students about the organization. In October, we held our first packing event. Forty-four Charles River School middle school students were on campus at 6:40am, well before their school day began, eyes bright and full of energy. That morning, they packed 1,232 pairs of underwear for 176 youth in need. The event was visited by Levan Reid of WBZ News and several of our students had the chance to be interviewed on live television.

Our students really enjoyed the fall event and we held a second drive and packing event in the spring. Two middle schoolers, Adia and Will, interviewed the Executive Director and Founder of Cocotree Kids, Catherine Maloy, about the essential work of the organization and CRS's plans to continue the partnership.

What inspired you to start Cocotree Kids?

I do not have a background in nonprofit work but have always been inspired by good work, community service, and paying attention to what the community needs. During the Covid pandemic, I wanted to find a way to help and talked to food pantries to ask what was needed. I learned that people were getting food but no one was getting underwear. We became the only organization in the state that meets this need.

Did you know about clothing insecurity before you started your organization?

Yes, but underwear insecurity was something I never thought of before I made those calls. We often think of shirts or pants, but not underwear. It is something that must be brand new and cannot be donated second-hand.

Where do the donations go?

We thought about the different categories of need for a child and built our partnerships to meet those needs. We partner with hospitals, clinics, food pantries, domestic violence shelters, the Department of Transitional Assistance, schools, and social service organizations across Massachusetts.

**Adia Rollings '26
(left) Will Apfel
'27 (right)
interview
Catherine Maloy
of nonprofit
Cocotree Kids
(center)**

How many kids are impacted each year by the work of Cocotree Kids?

In 2024, we served roughly 20,000 children and distributed 170,000 pairs of underwear. To give some context, in 2021 we gave out 13,000 pairs. We've really grown. In our model, every child gets a pack of seven pairs. This year, we are on track to distribute 250,000 pairs! Thank you to CRS for helping us do that.

How did Cocotree get involved with CRS?

We were looking to find a way to engage young adults in our mission and to partner with schools. Laura Hahn P'27 is a dear friend of mine and our Chief Marketing Officer. Laura began our work with CRS.

Why is it important for middle school students to be involved with organizations like yours?

We've had more success getting younger kids involved with our mission. Middle school-aged students are complex and may have some discomfort talking about underwear. You two and your classmates set a great example of how to inspire other kids your age to help. Working with CRS is really special to us and we can be honest and transparent about the issues so you can really understand the help that is needed.

Are there other ways you think kids our age can help with your work?

The top need is introducing the mission and the sorting and packing of donated items, but I think there are ways to get young adults involved with the speaking, administration, and marketing parts, too. Writing an article for a local newspaper or launching a social media campaign would be really neat. Maybe students could help share their tech skills to brainstorm ways to spread the word or help us organize the data. We want to pick your brains because you have a lot of good ideas!

Is there anything else you wish the CRS community knew?

I want everyone to understand at a deeper level how important the work is that you've done for Cocotree Kids. The underwear you prepared went to students in your age group in communities in MA that had no other access to underwear. I want to emphasize how important and unique the work is that you're doing and how great it is for your age group to contribute. You've had a direct impact on the children and families we work with. You and your classmates have engaged in the work with a smile and it is clear you fundamentally get what we're trying to achieve. 🙌

**We look forward to taking our
partnership with Cocotree Kids
to the next level!**



This year, it is our turn to host! Save the date and come cheer on CRS on Friday, October 3.

UNDER THE FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

In October 2024, we launched a new tradition: the first annual Friday Night Lights, co-hosted with Dedham Country Day School. On a crisp fall evening, our community came together for a celebration of spirited competition, teamwork, and joy. Family and friends cheered from the sidelines as students competed in cross country, flag football, field hockey, and soccer. With cookout eats, sweet treats, a stunning sunset, blue and gold face paint galore, and our Otter mascot giving out endless high fives, the night was pure community magic.



SPORTS DAY

BLUE VS. GOLD: A CRS TRADITION

Students from PreK-8 enjoyed a glorious spring day playing cooperative games with Buddies and competing in races, obstacle courses, and more. We always love seeing your Sports Day creativity, Otters! Spirits were high, especially among members of the Gold Team who won this year's competition.



Kris Gregoire '29, Harrison Black '32, and William Murphy '29 go full throttle



Charlotte Paglia '30 hops with confidence in the sack race



Timmy Williams '25 and William Schawbel '34 participate in a Buddy race



Eloise Glaeseman '28 and Norah Zhang '32



Noelle Pierce, CRS Art Teacher, rocks her homemade Sports Day ensemble



Ollie Gallinaro '29 crosses the finish line for Team Blue in the fourth grade relay race



The Apfel family celebrates in style—Reid '29, Will '27, Ellie '25, and Sam '31



Maya Engle '26 and Michaela Laguerre '26 share a laugh

Class of 2025 Team Blue basketball free throws



Members of the Class of 2030 cheer on Team Gold

New Beginnings: Get to know Corie Fogg P'34, CRS's new Associate Head of School

What drew you to Charles River School?

At its core, CRS stands out as a place where progressive education isn't just a philosophy; it's a lived experience. The commitment to nurturing curiosity, encouraging collaboration, and celebrating each student's voice resonates deeply with me.

What parts of our mission statement speak to you most?

It's a photofinish for me between joy and knowing oneself. To hold the joy of childhood at its core, CRS is committing to ensuring that students love their learning. It's a place that holds giggles, play, and delight in hand with the pursuit of knowledge. That's beautiful to witness as an educator. Likewise, for graduates to leave with the full understanding that they are known, seen, celebrated, and centered for their unique wonder and gifts is equally exciting.

What are you really looking forward to in year 1?

Immersing myself in the daily life of the school and spending quality time authentically getting to know the students, teachers, and families who make up our vibrant community. This first year is much about listening—learning the unique culture and aspirations of the community. Ultimately, I'm looking forward to being a connector, one with a big heart and a clear voice.

We heard you love to garden. What is your favorite part?

Felicitously, I inherited this from my father. He loved to garden, a passion instilled in him by his own grandmother. His knowledge of flowers was unmatched, and this became a daily spring into fall passion for us to share. For me, tending a garden is believing in tomorrow. That's what planting a seed in the ground is at its simplest. Many of my great-grandmother's iris and my dad's lilies are still thriving in various New England flowerbeds. One of my dad's dearest college friends has perennials that have returned for over two decades in Winchester; another friend calls me every spring when her peonies begin

to bloom in her Portsmouth backyard; and there are even a few copper beech trees here in Dover that stand because my dad planted them long ago. It feels humbling and meaningful to me to connect to the ground, and I've loved curating my own garden.

Do you have a suggestion for a book or podcast you would recommend?

I love the writing of Kelly Corrigan and Julie Lythcott-Haims. Reading with my daughter offers its own list; Marigold and I highly recommend anything illustrated by Loren Long, Christian Robinson, or Marla Frazee. As for podcasts, the teacher in me was raised on *The Cult of Pedagogy*. Still resonant after years of work, Gonzalez imparts evergreen insights, metaphors, and research for teachers. *EdSurge* is another one that combines policy, practice, and philosophy for education. Lastly, *Good Inside* and *We Can Do Hard Things* (both books and podcasts) have afforded me levity and lessons.

What's a cherished memory you have from your elementary school years?

I can still remember every teacher's name I've ever had because of how they made me feel as a child—like anything was possible. Mrs. Bellamy was my kindergarten teacher; she played the piano gently to get our attention during class. She relished May Day, making a spring celebration of each of us as individuals. Mrs. McGrail, my beloved 4th-grade teacher, crafted cozy floor spaces throughout her room as she read aloud to us each day, dramatically embodying characters with different voices.

You are returning to an area near where you grew up. What are you excited to revisit?

I'm most excited about the sense of familiarity and rhythm that comes with being in a place that shaped part of who I am. Whether it's walking through a nearby trail I used to run, renavigating the roads where I learned to drive, visiting a museum or library that's still thriving, or simply reuniting with old friends, there's something grounding about returning to a landscape that feels both known and new. 🌱



Corie Fogg, Associate Head of School, and daughter Marigold '34



FOSTERING A Love of Independent Reading

FOR ONE SPECIAL WEEK IN MARCH, the CRS Playbarn was transformed. Rather than being filled with tricycles, bouncy balls, and playmats, the space was stocked with books. Visitors encountered shelf after shelf and wall after wall of beautiful books for all grade levels, interests, and reading abilities.

The purpose of the room changed, but one thing remained consistent all week—deep curiosity and great joy on students' faces. After a hiatus, the CRS Book Fair had returned to campus! The fair was led by Kelsey Thomas, School Librarian, and Jamie Engle P'26 '29, Community Association Vice Chair. Parents and caregivers supported the event by volunteering to help with sales before and after school. During their library classes, every single student visited the fair with Kelsey and got to pick out a free book of their choosing. While perusing the wide selection, students made lists for future reading and their personal collections, and created a communal list for adding to the CRS library.

The goals of the fair were simple: to celebrate the joy of childhood through reading, inspire excitement for books, and encourage independent reading. Mission accomplished. 🐾

CRS Book Recommendations

Curated by Kelsey Thomas, School Librarian

PREK-2

Who Would Win? Coyote vs. Dingo by Jerry Pallotta
The Perfect Spot by Kallie George
Power Up with a Power Drill (The Fix-Its) by Sarah Lynne Reul
Fox Plays Ball by Corey R. Tabor
Ratnip: Lost and Found in the City by Cam Higgins
The Great Puptective by Alina Tysoe
I Just Ate My Friend by Heidi McKinnon

GRADES 3-5

The Guardian Test (Legends of Lotus Island #1) by Christina Soontornvat
The Mystery of Locked Rooms by Lindsay Currie
Iceberg by Jennifer A. Nielsen
The Lost Library by Rebecca Stead and Wendy Mass
Spy Penguins by Sam Hay
Skunk and Badger by Amy Timberlake
Chickenpox by Remy Lai

GRADES 6-8

The Night War by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley
Jawbreaker by Christina Wyman
New Girl by Cassandra Calin
Mexikid by Pedro Martín
Pearl by Sherri L. Smith
Scholastic Year in Sports 2025 by James Buckley Jr.
Mixed-Up by Kami Garcia

Words of Wisdom

FOR OUR GRADUATES

We asked our alumni community to share a piece of advice for the Class of 2025 and were thrilled to receive thoughtful reflections on high school, career paths, and timeless values. The following are excerpts from what our alums shared; the full versions have been given to our graduates as they embark on their post-CRS educations.



Theodore Chase Jr. '51

For would-be scientists: take as much math as you can, and statistics. For would-be humanists: make sure your high school teaches you to write well. For all: develop a strong interest in something; it will help you get into college, and may be your life's work.

Kayla Masterman '06

The world is big. You're going to meet different types of people, experience new expectations, and school will get harder, but believe that you can do it and you'll rise to the occasion. You have within you all the ability you need to be successful in whatever that means for you.



Jon Kleiman '00

Cherish the relationships you've been able to cultivate as a student at CRS. It's not easy to find such a loving, supportive environment where you are known.



Juliet Thompson Hochman '81

Be true to yourself! Seek out the people in high school who like the same things you do. . . . They may not be the cool kids but they will be the interesting kids with whom you'll be friends for a lifetime.

Sienna Marino '22

Do not be afraid of high school! You will find your way and your lifelong friends!



Jefferson Smythe '02

One of the healthiest things a place like CRS can impart is an ability to understand yourself, your values, and your goals, and equip you with the skills and resilience to attain those goals. Building on this foundation with the ability to learn and adapt, combined with a supportive network like the CRS community, you will be equipped with one of the best “life starting kits” to take with you going forward! Life will give you setbacks, rejections, and curveballs/sliders. This “kit” helps you get beyond them.



Jessica Thompson Somol '84

Be kind and compassionate. There is a difference—kindness is about love and being a nice person. Compassion is about acting on that kindness, easing the burden of others, and making their lives better. You have an outstanding education behind you and more to learn. There is no doubt you have the smarts and intellect to change the world if you so choose. Do so with grace, kindness, and compassion and the world will be better for it. Congratulations to you all!

Ashley Edgar Milliken '84

Be kind. Be curious. Human skills are as important as hard/academic skills. Take advantage of the opportunities you have. Go to extra help sessions that are offered. Your teachers want to help you! Be prompt and reliable—then, when you really need someone to cut you some slack, you'll have trust built up already. And finally, get off your phone and connect with the people around you. They are amazing!



Elliot Perkins '83

Always respect and consider the ideas of other people. By far, my most valuable experience of CRS was the deep and frequent brainstorming we did; it was how we were taught to consider problems. I would suggest to you, the CRS Class of 2025, that you are and will continue to be awash in ideas; the act of coming together to consider ideas will allow you and

your peers to shape your own paths into the world in a way that belongs to you.



Dana Lowitt '19

Don't ever let anyone tell you that your dreams are unrealistic or silly. Work towards what you love and everything will fall into place.



Jonah Mathew '25



Lauren McElligott '25

CONGRATULATIONS graduates

CLASS OF 2025





CRS “End-to-Enders” Kayla Itzkovits '25, Silas Williams '25, and Erin Grimm '25



Tenley Rogers '25 and advisor Hannah Sokol



Emre Zisfein-Shea '25 and Dahlia Zisfein-Shea '31



Max Murphy '25 shares his talk *Construction*



Class of 2025 tiles



Theo Lee '25 performs *Clair de Lune*



Maddie Taylor '25

Class of 2025 sings *Diamonds* by Rihanna



2025 GRADUATES



Ellie
Apfel



Theodore
Lee



Wesley
Pham



Timmy
Williams



Micah
Eisner



Lily
Maley



Tenley
Rogers



Emre
Zisfein-Shea



Alan
Gonzalez



Cole
Marino



Rosie
Sass



Erin
Grimm



Jonah
Mathew



Ella
Sparacino



Eleanor
Haber



Lauren
McElligott



Gray
Stokes



Kayla
Itzkovits



Max
Murphy



Maddie
Taylor



Skylar
Kjellander



Sam
Murphy



Silas
Williams

2025 Matriculation

Dana Hall School
Dexter Southfield School
Isidore Newman School (LA)
Medfield High School
Medway High School
Milton Academy
Miss Porter's School (CT)
Phillips Academy Andover
Sharon High School
South Shore Charter Public School
St. Mark's School
Stoughton High School
The Cambridge School of Weston
The Rivers School
The Williston Northampton School

Community Events



Compass and
Rainbow Families
bowling outing

There were many moments
of CRS community and joy
throughout the year.



Rebecca and Brian Grimm P'23 '25,
Gabe Burnstein P'30 '30 '34, and Leslie
Jackson Judge '91 and Mick Judge
P'24 '26 attend the Welcome
Back party



Kate and Dan Foran P'33;
Chris and Roberta Thomson
P'33; and Robin Devaney
P'34 celebrate at the spring
leadership giving reception
at Charlescote Farm

Key Dates in the Admissions Process

Admissions season is underway! We are really 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 begin each year in mid-September. Please contact Director of Enrollment Management & Financial Aid Sarah Wooten at swooten@charlesriverschool.org or 508-785-8213 with questions.

Individual Tours

Weekdays throughout the fall and winter

Open House

October 24 (Grades PreK-8), November 13 (Grades 5-8)

Deadlines

Application Deadline: January 15, 2026

Financial Aid Deadline: February 1, 2026

Notifications

Decisions are shared by March 10, 2026

Contracts are due April 10, 2026



May Black P'31 '32, Ruthie Straus P'30 '32, Dustin Willard P'29 '32, and Rachel Stanley P'23 '26 volunteer at the CRS Fair



Danielle Frankel and Michael Pellicano P'34 and Bayao Zheng and Lin Bo P'27 under the pavilion at the Welcome Back party



CRS marches in the Boston Pride for the People Parade

THE THIRD GRADE Silk Route Expedition

By Kristin Jayne & Jamie Scavone,
Grade 3 Co-Teachers

EVERY SEPTEMBER there are always a few children in third grade asking, “Are we really going to travel to Venice?”

Despite the chorus of “no’s” that reply, there is a look of wonder on students’ faces, that maybe, just maybe, we will. It’s perfectly understandable, as we have clearly prepared for a voyage. Students generate questions that will influence our expedition, and we consider what we might want to pack, both for a change in location and for time travel. Each child makes their own passport that allows them to travel on a journey that takes us from Italy to Turkey to India to China. This small, handmade travel document is the key to unlocking our thematic curriculum



Learning to make and enjoy ravioli for Italian Feast Day with Kids Cooking Green

studying the Silk Routes. Third graders have put thought into their preparations and they are hooked.

We hold tight to student wonder and curiosity, and use that to guide us through a voyage that starts at the Customs desk. Students present their passports and enter a classroom that has been transformed overnight into Venice, Italy. The walls are decorated with Italian art, and our student travelers begin their discoveries perusing books while listening to the music of Vivaldi. Students learn about glass-making and salt production, art, music, and food. We invite experts into our classroom to visit, helping us make our own ravioli. We step away from our Dover campus and into Boston’s own palazzo at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum. Back in the classroom, we simulate trading





(Above & Right)
Field trips to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum and the Greater Boston Chinese Cultural Association

(Top Right)
Students entered “classroom Customs” as they traveled to each new location with their passports



goods and discuss why people would travel out of their city-states. The children learn about trading building materials for salt and farm animals for glassware. They expand their exploration to the concept of trading knowledge, culture, and belief systems.

We ask them to be adventurous and inquisitive. At each new stop on our journey, we begin by asking, “What are you wondering about? What do you want to know?” As we continue our passage east, visiting countries in the Middle East, and then onto India and China, we focus on researching the answers to the questions they have generated. Students delve into the history, topography,

and customs of the countries in these geographic areas. We discuss Kublai Khan, and his quest for information and enlightenment. The Khan valued the exchange of ideas and beliefs every bit as much as the exchange of goods. Following the movements of traders carrying his paizas, or golden tablets, for protection, we show our third graders how information moved through borders, how religions were spread from one location to another, and how gunpowder and silk from China made their way west to Europe.

Third graders collect passport stamps from each country we visit throughout our

10-month journey, each one signifying highlights of the learning experience we have together.

With open minds, we celebrate our discoveries, our similarities, and our differences. Our students leave our classroom with the burgeoning notion that there are many ways of thinking and doing things, rather than just the way they may be accustomed. We appreciate the values, both tangible and intangible, that we have learned along the way. And we ignite curiosity and joy, and the belief that they did, in fact, travel along the Silk Routes for a short time in third grade. ☺

The Confidence to Change Lives

“Having a direct impact on others has always felt most stimulating and important to me.”



KAYLA MASTERMAN RECALLS HER TIME AS A STUDENT AT CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL VIVIDLY and with contagious joy. “I spent first to eighth grade at CRS. Being self-aware at that age is hard, but the feelings stay with you. I felt very well-supported and held in a loving, warm community,” Kayla said.

She affectionately thinks of the teachers who empowered her, especially her time in Rachel Miller’s fifth-grade classroom and the meaningful friendship she built with her middle school advisor Mary Walsh. She remembers running around the CRS Fair with her friends and older brother David ’04 (in fact, her family still has video footage), exploring the CRS auction, and adventuring on an overnight hiking trip. Most importantly, she remembers feeling secure in expressing her true self without worrying about comparison and knowing that she had so much to offer the world.

After CRS, Kayla headed to Beaver Country Day School and then to Union College. She explored the world, studying abroad in Buenos Aires, spending a semester in York, England, and embarking on a trip during her senior year to India. She graduated and moved to Washington, D.C. to work in health-care consulting and participate in a volunteer program at the Children’s National Hospital. Deciding she wanted to make an impact with more hands-on work, Kayla next attended graduate school at the University of Chicago where she earned her Master of Social Work. After getting her MSW, she moved back to the East Coast and joined a two-year fellowship.

“Having a direct impact on others has always felt most stimulating and important to me,” Kayla shared.

Fast-forward to the present day. As a Licensed Independent Clinical Social Worker, Kayla spends her days working in a pediatric outpatient psychotherapy clinic in Boston. She specializes in evidence-based treatments and behavioral therapies, working with children, adolescents, and parents. She particularly enjoys interacting with the middle childhood and adolescent age range. Her work often targets anxiety, depression, trauma, OCD, and personality disorders. She always makes time to help families advocate for resources and often connects with school counselors. The treatments she works with are skills-focused and help children to build coping mechanisms.

The most rewarding part? “When kids or parents feel,” Kayla said. “When they respond to a feeling directly rather than pretending the problem isn’t there. I love helping a kid articulate uncomfortable emotions and the win of understanding what they are feeling is okay and that they have the power within them to manage it.”

Kayla really values building relationships with her patients and learning about their daily lives. She strives to create a space for kids to be themselves and have the room to talk about anything on their minds. She understands that talking about heavy topics can be hard, and she always works to balance the heaviness with moments of joy and humor.

She credits CRS for building her own foundation of self-assurance that has helped her far beyond her time as an Otter.

“The skills I built at CRS, to stand tall, are what I use to make my clients feel confident.” She remembers talking to a prospective parent on a tour as a 7th grader. The visitor told Kayla she made great eye contact. She responded, “Thanks. I’ve been talking to adults and performing in sharing assemblies my whole time here.”

These skills that Kayla learned and serve her in her day-to-day life are still taught to CRS students. Charles River School utilizes the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence RULER social emotional curriculum to help students navigate their feelings in tandem with their studies. Teachers authentically incorporate RULER into the classroom and focus on understanding the value of emotions and building the skills of emotional intelligence. For Kayla, learning

about emotions is just as important as learning about math or reading. Being able to harness and listen to them effectively is a super power.

“School is the second biggest environment kids are in, beyond home. CRS’s work in educating teachers and having social and emotional learning as a part of everyday teaching sets kids up for success. So much of what I see in my office is children doing what they need to survive, but this is not always sustainable or effective. School can do a lot to inform how kids experience the world and process their emotions. A teacher finding the balance of validating what a student is feeling while maintaining consequences and expectations is so important. These little moments are sometimes missed at home, but they are never missed at CRS.”

Over the 2025–2026 school year, Kayla is excited to give back to a place that will always be meaningful to her. She will come to CRS and talk to parents, faculty, and students, spending time with students in the classroom and with caregivers in Foster Hall.

Kayla loves to travel, spend time outdoors, and explore the restaurant scene with her husband, Zack. They talk about sending their future children to CRS.

Kayla strives to be a sounding board to the members of the CRS community and offers consulting services. You can connect with Kayla via Kayla.Masterman@gmail.com 📧

Kayla Masterman '06 works daily with children and families as a mental health professional. She is partnering with CRS this school year.



Kayla at her 8th grade graduation

New Faculty & Staff



Lisa Balazs
7/8 SCIENCE TEACHER

Lisa has been a teacher in the public and private sectors for 24 years. She holds a Master of Secondary Education from the University of Massachusetts-Boston and has a dual certification in middle school math and general science. Before joining CRS, Lisa helped her previous school raise a garden, a hydroponics system, and a greenhouse. She prides herself on developing a curriculum that is rooted in inclusivity and emphasizes social justice and social emotional learning.



Jennine Ballew
SCHOOL COUNSELOR

Jennine is a dynamic school counselor with extensive experience in both international and U.S.-based learning environments. She holds a Master in Counseling degree from Arizona State University. Jennine specializes in the development and implementation of comprehensive social and emotional learning and growth education programs that promote student well-being and inclusivity. Committed to removing barriers to learning, Jennine strives to create a supportive educational atmosphere that fosters student success.



Maggie Booth
4TH GRADE CO-TEACHER

Maggie is a seasoned educator with both international and U.S.-based teaching experience for over 13 years. She holds a Master of Arts in Teaching from Lewis and Clark Graduate School of Education and Counseling. Maggie has served as a peer mentor for educators and developed an extensive literacy curriculum for students in grades PreK through middle school. She loves to inspire children to embrace the joy of learning and has worked with students and families from a variety of backgrounds.



Roisin Duffy
5TH GRADE CO-TEACHER

Roisin is a passionate educator who thrives on building meaningful connections with students and fostering their academic and personal growth. She holds a Master of Elementary Education degree from Lesley University and has recently completed an apprenticeship at Shady Hill School, where she taught third and fourth grade students. With experience in diverse classroom settings, she brings creativity, empathy, and a collaborative spirit to her teaching practice.



Corie Fogg
ASSOCIATE HEAD
OF SCHOOL

Corie is an educational leader with two decades of experience fostering dynamic learning environments with an emphasis on inclusivity, instructional and pedagogical development, and mentorship. Previously, Corie served as Dean of Faculty at The Williston Northampton School where she provided academic leadership through strategic faculty oversight—including hiring, onboarding, and retention. She also stewarded a significant professional development budget, ensuring faculty can access the resources and learning opportunities necessary to advance teaching excellence and scholarly engagement. She has served as an English and history teacher, coach, and advisor in diverse educational settings spanning from Massachusetts to California. Corie earned a Bachelor of Arts in English and Theater Arts and a Master of Education in Curriculum and Instruction from Boston College as well as a Certificate in School Management and Leadership from Harvard Business School/Harvard Graduate School of Education. She is a frequent presenter at national conferences, an avid researcher, and a regular contributor to educational publications.

Read more about Corie on page 28.

New Trustees

Board of Trustees

President
Kate Paglia

Vice President
Rebecca Grimm

Treasurer
James McElligott

Clerk
Dan Stokes

Joining the officers and returning Trustees are these new Board members.

Thank you to the Trustees who have completed their terms:

Laura Kunkemueller '80
Bruce Levine P'28 '32
Fred Ramos P'22 '24
Will Willis '88 P'23 '30



Molly Carney
P'30 '32

Molly is the Immediate Past Chair of the Charles River School Community Association and in that role, served a two-year term as an ex-officio voting member of the Charles River School Board of Trustees. Upon completion of her time as Community Association Chair, Molly rejoins as a Trustee. Molly serves on the Community, Equity and Inclusion Committee, the Executive Committee, the Committee on Trustees, and the Community Engagement & Communications Committee. She has a background in education 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. Molly holds a PhD in Curriculum and Instruction from Boston College, an MEd from Harvard University, and a BA from the University of Notre Dame. She loves to ski, hike, and be on the water. Molly lives in Dover with her husband Ned and their two children, Piper '30 and Bea '32.



George Maley P'25

George is the Chief Advancement Officer at the Noble and Greenough School (Nobles) in Dedham, MA. He served as co-chair of the 2024–2025 inaugural CRS Grade 8 Gift to Honor Faculty along with his wife, Erin, and Dan and Haley Stokes P'23 '25 '28. George recently completed his 22nd year at Nobles. From 2003–2008, George served as Campaign Director for the \$101M One Nobles Campaign. In 2008, George took over the Chief Advancement Officer role. George oversaw the fundraising for numerous building projects and has also led the way to establishing more than 60 new endowed funds in the last 16 years. For many years, George has coached football, wrestling, track, and girls lacrosse. He graduated from Juniata College (PA) in 1992 with a degree in English. George also holds a Master's Degree in Business Communications from LaSalle University. George and Erin have three daughters and his youngest, Lily, graduated from CRS in 2025.

New Faculty & Staff



Mary McConville
KINDERGARTEN CO-TEACHER

Mary is a compassionate educator who recently served as a CRS long-term substitute in first and second grade. We are thrilled to have her take on the co-teaching position in the Kindergarten classroom this year. Mary holds a Bachelor's degree in Education Studies from Wellesley College. Previously, she was an associate teacher at the The Croft School. She loves hiking and yoga and has a passion for health and wellness.



Martine Sifakis
PREK TEACHER

Martine is an enthusiastic teacher with a decade of experience in early childhood education. She holds a Master of Education degree in Instructional Design/Educational Research from Northeastern University. Martine served as the lead STEM educator at the Bowen Cooperative Nursery School, where she developed the science curriculum for the preschool program. She uses an empathetic approach to support children's unique needs through each developmental stage.



Hannah Grace Porter
PART-TIME LITERACY
SPECIALIST

Hannah is a highly trained intervention specialist committed to designing effective academic instruction that promotes student gains by applying research-based practices effectively. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Special Education with Honors, and a focus in Early Childhood Education from the College of Charleston in South Carolina. Hannah is also certified in Slingerland Literacy and Orton-Gillingham.



Dan Wall
CONTROLLER

Dan joined the CRS team in April of 2025 in the role of Controller. Dan is a certified public accountant and holds an MBA from Bentley University. He has previously served as senior accountant for the Boston Red Sox, and in financial roles in the biotech and pharmaceutical sectors. Dan brings a drive for process improvement from his professional experiences as a technology solutions consultant. He lives on the campus of the Fessenden School with his wife, Maggie, a fifth grade teacher, and their two young children. He serves as a dorm parent at Fessenden and enjoys spending time outside, gardening in the summer, and snowboarding in the winter.

Faculty Farewells

With heartfelt thanks for your decades of service!



Elizabeth Clayton
18 YEARS

"It is difficult to put into words how much Charles River School has meant to me and my family over the past 18 years. There are many wonderful things about CRS, and at the top of the list are the relationships that exist between colleagues, between teachers and students, and between families and faculty members. My children, Freddy '17 and Mary Cate '20, have maintained strong connections with their CRS teachers, and I will definitely follow their lead and stay in touch!"

Elizabeth has made a profound impact on Charles River School during her eighteen years as Associate Head of Charles River School. In addition to her responsibilities on the Leadership Team, Elizabeth loved being a coach of the CRS girls basketball team and a middle school advisor. Throughout her time at CRS, she has also taught 6th-grade science and 7th and 8th-grade math, served as the Middle School Coordinator, and helped hire and mentor countless faculty members.

Over the last nearly two decades, Elizabeth has poured her heart and her many talents into Charles River School working alongside three different Heads of School. Whether she was leading the secondary school high school placement process and tirelessly advocating for our students as they pursue their next schools, meeting with an advisee, supporting a family, speaking eloquently about a 14-year-old at CRS graduation, or supporting our students on Sports Day (cheering slightly louder for the Blue Team), Elizabeth stopped at nothing for our community. She will be known for her unique ability to take on a challenging situation with calm and compassion as well as her student-centered approach to leadership and commitment to faculty and staff professional development.

CRS congratulates Elizabeth on her next adventure as Head of School at Sant Bani School in New Hampshire!



Laura Mutch
11 YEARS

"After 30+ amazing years in education, the last 11 here at CRS, I've decided it is time for me to leave the classroom. When I was first hired here at CRS I knew this would be the last place I'd teach. My time here has been full of personal and professional gifts. Watching my wonderful students learn and grow, laughing with co-workers and connecting with families has brought me such joy and satisfaction. I'll always be an Otter in my heart."

Laura dedicated over a decade building student capacity and confident students at CRS. She spent 36 years overall as a teacher. Laura has partnered with her co-teachers on many cherished CRS projects and traditions including the beloved CRS Ancient Greece Olympic Games and the Griot Gala. During her time at CRS, she also served on the Charles River School Board of Trustees as the faculty representative.

Laura will be remembered for her deep dedication to helping children gain independence and become empowered by providing purposeful experiences that challenge all levels of learners.

CRS wishes Laura the best of luck on her next adventure pursuing a different passion as a Life Coach!



[Alumni News]

CRS 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award Winner: Molly Plummer Cook '95

CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL IS EXCITED TO ANNOUNCE MOLLY PLUMMER COOK '95 as the recipient of the 2025 Distinguished Alumni Award. This award is presented every other year to a member of the alumni community who has demonstrated excellence in personal accomplishment, professional achievement, or humanitarian service, or has made significant contributions to the school, whose efforts have built community, and whose dedication has enhanced the lives of our students, faculty, and staff.

Molly is the true embodiment of this award and of all that CRS hopes to instill in its graduates. A clinical psychologist and founder of the North Shore Center for Neuropsychology in Marblehead, Molly works with children, adolescents, and young adults. She served two terms on the CRS Board, from 2011 to 2017, and is currently a trustee at The Brookwood School in Manchester. Giving back to the community is a core value for Molly, as evidenced by her involvement with the Salem-based Plummer Youth Promise, an organization that serves youths in foster care in residential- and community-based settings, helping them find families, skills and community to become healthy adults. She has also recently joined the board of the Peabody Essex Museum in Salem. Molly was nominated by her former teacher Teresa Baker, who noted Molly's dedication to serving youth, her enthusiastic advocacy for the arts, and her community engagement.

We look forward to welcoming Molly back to campus on October 17 for a ceremony and luncheon in her honor. [1]

Class of 1955 Reunion

IN MAY, CRS WAS THRILLED TO HOST MEMBERS OF THE CRS CLASS OF 1955 and their spouses for a visit on campus before they enjoyed a luncheon at the Dover home of classmate Stephen White and his wife Gina. The group, organized by Paul Schmid, met with Head of School Gabe Burnstein and enjoyed spending time in their old classrooms in Founders House as well as touring other areas of campus. Pictured, left to right: **Boynton Glidden, Christian Schmid, Stephen White, Gabe Burnstein, Rennie Clark Roberts, Bob Morse, and Paul Schmid.** [2]



3

1962

[3] TOBY DEWEY '62 shared a wonderful photo from a gathering in the fall of a theater group that put on shows in Millis in the late 1950s and early 1960s. Toby reminisces, "We put on musicals annually in a barn for over six years. All our parents were involved from writing, directing, and creating costumes and sets, and the crowds grew every year. We all attended CRS and many of us ended up in the arts!" From left to right: **Janie Marion Morse '61**, **Badge Blackett '65**, **Toby Dewey '62**, **Peter Temple '62**, **Kippy Dewey '60**, **Jerry Arnold '65**, **Lisa Schmid Alvord '61**, and **Peter Dewey '65**.

1980

LAURA KUNKEMUELLER '80 has been appointed Commissioner of the Intercollegiate Rowing Association (IRA) and oversees the organization's operations and the execution of the national championship regatta. Laura just completed two terms on the Charles River School Board of Trustees, on which she was an integral part of the Building and Grounds Committee and helped the school with the strategic planning process.

1984

JESSICA THOMPSON SOMOL '84 is the new Chief Advancement Officer at Cathleen Stone Island Outward Bound School. Jess shares, "A powerful combination of Out-

ward Bound curriculum and STEM programs, CSIOBS offers Boston Public School kids unique experiential learning programs that boost academic success and foster personal growth."

1999

JIM QUAGLIAROLI '99 was honored as Growth Investor of the Year at GrowthCap's NYC Awards Night in March. Jim is the co-founder and managing partner of Silversmith Capital Partners.

2000

[4] TOMMY SULIMAN '00 continues to record and perform music as a member of the reggae and dub band Stick Figure. The band released a new single this summer, "What a Feeling," and also headlined the Levitate Music Festival in Massachusetts in July, allowing friends, family, and even his former teachers Jen Worthington and Pam Moor to see Tommy play live!

2022

[5] ANANT SHUKLA '02 stopped by campus with his wife, Julia, and his parents, Vishnu and Savita, in July. Julia and Anant have just moved to Colorado Springs from Nashville, where he completed a fellowship at Vanderbilt University. A Major in the US Army, Anant is an emergency medicine physician and he credits CRS with teaching him many of the skills he



4

uses in his professional life. While on campus, Anant and family visited the graduation tile Anant made, still on display in the Community Building, the Veterans Wall with photos and contributions from Anant and his sister **Renuka Shukla Rees '05**, and explored the updates to campus, including the new playground.



5



2014

ZION HARRIS '14 is taking on lead roles with Ballet Pensacola, where he has been dancing for the past two years. Previously, Zion was with First State Ballet in Delaware and the Fort Wayne Ballet in Indiana. In addition to his work on stage, Zion teaches ballet classes, is a personal trainer, and is certified by the American Ballet Theater in their teaching curriculum.

JILLIAN ROTHMAN '14 is pursuing a Masters Degree in Event Management at New York University. This follows three years as the Assistant Director of Admissions at Walnut Hill School for the Arts, which she attended after graduating from CRS. Jillian says, "By pursuing this degree, my goal is to learn how to build impactful events on a larger scale that help support and promote the arts."

2015

[6] JORDYN KERR '15 is entering her final year at Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health, where she is completing a Masters of Science in Environmental Health. Jordyn lives on the campus of Dana Hall School, where she serves as a dorm parent, and returned to CRS this summer as a lead counselor in the Creative Starts program.

2017

MELANIE CHEN '17 graduated from Vanderbilt University in May with a double major in Cello Performance and Human & Organizational Development. She will begin graduate work at the Juilliard School in the fall. At Vanderbilt, Melanie was a member of the varsity cheerleading squad and participated in an internship with the Nashville Symphony, among other activities.

[7] TREVOR McDONALD '17 is a senior at Trinity College in Connecticut, where he plays on the team that won the NCAA Division III Men's Basketball title in 2025. A psychology major, Trevor interned this summer with The Shift Group in Boston and serves on the NESCAC Student Advisory Committee on Athletics. Trevor connected with Athletic Director Paul Rupprecht this summer to play a round of golf.

2018

[8] TOMMY HICKS '18 stopped by campus in May to pick up a framed photo from his middle school days for his parents. A double major in biology and government at Franklin & Marshall College in PA, Tommy is a member of the Men's Tennis team and a rising senior. He conducted research on plant resistance strategies to two novel pathogens this spring, and is a biology tutor who earned Centennial Conference Academic Honor Roll status.



2020

MARY CATE CLAYTON '20 is a sophomore at The University of Maine, majoring in mechanical engineering with a plan to concentrate on aerospace engineering. She sings with the University Singers, a formal, classical chorus, and the UMaine Renaissance, an a cappella group. This summer, she worked at Bell the Cat Cafe in Belfast, Maine while also taking courses.

2021

JACKSON BEEHR '21 graduated from Xaverian Brothers High School in the spring. He was a member of the National Honor Society and the French National Honor Society as well as the varsity baseball team. Jackson is now a first-year student at Salem State University, where he will continue to play baseball.

TERENCE FLEWELLING-ALLEN '21 graduated from St. Andrew's School in Rhode Island last spring with his former CRS advisor and French teacher, Julie Weeden, in attendance to cheer him on. Terrence is now a first-year student at Clark University, where he is a member of the men's lacrosse team.



8



9

2022

AFFY KASMIRSKI '22 is a senior at Dover-Sherborn High School and keeps busy with a variety of community service projects. She has participated in service trips to build houses in Maine and ran her own fundraiser this spring to purchase books for two elementary school libraries in underserved Massachusetts communities. Affy is a member of the National Honor Society.

[9] Former Second Grade Teacher **RO CHOW** and her family visited from California in June and made sure to stop by CRS where her three children loved playing on the new playground. They met up with current One/Two Teacher Theresa Leone on campus before their two families went out for ice cream together.

2004—20 Years Later

This fall, we mailed letters that members of the Class of 2004 wrote to their future selves in their 8th grade year. Twenty years on, it's a safe bet that none of the students remembered writing the notes, let alone their content. As a result of the outreach, we heard updates from quite a few members of the class. (Please contact Kat Whitten at kwhitten@charlesriversschool.org if you didn't receive your note. We would love to update your address and be in touch!)

[10] **NIKHIL MALIK** lives in Norwood, MA and shared a photo from his wedding last summer to his wife, Rachel. Pictured are: **Alexi Sacco, Nikhil, Sam Olsen, and Jonah Ruddy**. Nikhil is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at the USC Marshall School of Business.

SAM OLSEN is living in Vietnam where he is teaching English. He described the experience as a lot of ups and downs, "but the ups are outweighing the downs so far."



10

IN THE KNOW



SARA REMSEN is in Gloucester, MA and is the CEO and co-founder of Melodi, an analytics platform for teams building and managing AI agents.

[11] ELIZABETH JONES CHARBONNET (pictured here at her 8th grade graduation) checked in from Ames, Iowa, where she lives with her husband, Joe. Elizabeth is a Senior Engineer at Carollo Engineers.

CHRISTOPHER RICHARDS is a professor of Art History at Colby College, focusing primarily on Medieval art. He has kindly offered to lend his expertise to CRS students, as he is passionate about the importance of training in visual literacy.

JONAH RUDDY checked in from Brunswick, Maine. He says he is still in contact with multiple CRS classmates and friends.

EMILY GREIFF SIMPSON is living in Seattle and working as a mental health professional specializing in eating disorders. She remains very close to Lindsay Bloom, whom she visited last fall in order to meet Lindsay's new baby.

SHIVANI SHRIVASTAVA is living in Pittsburgh, not far from Carnegie Mellon University where she received both her undergraduate and graduate degrees. She works in the health care field and after a stint in New York, she returned to Pittsburgh, where she and her husband are raising their two young children.

MARIA STRACQUALURSI is living in Canton, MA and sent a note saying she couldn't wait to relive her childhood dreams when she received her predictions from the past.

HANNAH ANDERSON VEYETEE lives in Littleton, Colorado. She expressed what many classmates were likely feeling: "I can't believe it's been 20 years!"

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@charlesriver.school.org by June 1, 2026 to include them in the next issue of *The Current*.

IN MEMORIAM

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

TONI DONAGHUE died peacefully on July 17, 2025, surrounded by family, following a brave battle with Acute Myeloid Leukemia. Toni was the mother of **Brendan Donaghue '92**, **Meghan Donaghue Sutherland '93**, and **Tarah Donaghue Breed '96**. Toni spent nearly 25 years as a real estate professional in Dover, where she was also known for braving all types of New England weather during her daily runs on the streets of the town, rarely missing a day for 36 years straight. Toni is survived by her husband of 51 years, Jack, her children, and her nine grandchildren. During their time as CRS parents, Toni and Jack were both deeply involved with the school, and Toni is remembered for chairing the CRS Fair.

BARBARA HOWES, of Chatham, passed away peacefully on January 16, 2025, surrounded by her loving family. She was the devoted wife for 49 years of the late Frank L. Howes and mother of **Sanda Howes '74** and **Virginia Howes Anton '68**. While raising their two daughters, Bobby volunteered at Charles River School and worked as a successful real estate broker in Wellesley and Dover. Bobby's kindness, generosity, humor, and the countless stories of her nearly 100 years of life entertained many who visited her.

FRED KANTROWITZ, passed away November 13, 2024, at Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center in Boston. He was the loving husband of Anne Kirby; devoted father of **Gregory '00** and **William '03**; father-in-law of Katie and Brittany; and proud grandfather of Jack, Ava, and Jameson. Fred's health struggles as a child, intellectual curiosity, and desire to help others led him to a career in medicine. His illustrious medical career was highlighted by nearly 50 years on the Beth Israel staff, more than 30 published works, and a chapter as team doctor for the Boston Celtics. Fred's many hobbies and interests included model trains, stamps and coins, freshwater fishing, horseback riding, sports, and history. Fred and Anne were both actively involved while parents at CRS, with Anne serving on the Board of Trustees in the 1990s.

ROBERT LEESON, JR. '45 died peacefully, surrounded by his family, on January 5, 2025. Rob was born to Evelyn O.T. Leeson and Robert Leeson in Boston on December 23, 1932. His childhood years were spent in the Boston area, where he attended the Charles River School, Dexter School, and St. Mark's School. After graduating from Harvard in 1955, he served in the US Army stationed in

Korea where he achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant. Following his military service, Rob returned to New England and married Margaret Hazard Goddard, eventually settling together in Providence, RI, where he worked until his retirement in 2008. Throughout his life, Rob was a faithful steward of the land and his love for the environment remains an inspiration to his children and grandchildren. Rob was a lifelong skier, world traveler, and sailor who participated in the Newport to Bermuda Race several times and completed a transatlantic crossing by sailboat as well.

ROBERT MORSE '55, affectionately known as Bob, passed away peacefully at age 83 on July 20, 2025, surrounded by his immediate family. After graduating from CRS, Bob attended Milton Academy and the University of Pennsylvania, where he also joined the Reserve Officer's Training Corps (ROTC). After graduation, he served in the United States Navy, where he honed his sense of discipline, duty, and commitment to something greater than himself. Bob spent his career in life insurance and financial planning, working for Mass Mutual and other firms, and served his communities as a town representative and in various other church and civic groups. Bob and his wife Charlotte shared nearly 50 years of marriage filled with love, laughter, adventure, and enduring companionship. Together, they raised two children, Robert McNeil Morse and Kimberly Frances Morse. Bob is remembered as a tender, honest, intelligent, and principled man.

GEORGE G. PARKER '55 passed away in his sleep on September 9, 2024, at 81 years old. He grew up in Sherborn and attended Brooks School after CRS, before heading west to attend Lake Forest College outside of Chicago. He met and married Elizabeth Donnelly while living in New York City and the couple settled in Canton, MA, where they set roots in the community and raised a family. George worked in commercial real estate and sales throughout the Boston area, but his passions were always elsewhere. He grew lush vegetable gardens, instilling in his children a love and appreciation for the Earth. He will be remembered fondly and forever for his love of nature, good books and fine food, as well as his integrity, decency and gentle way. A beloved partner, father, grandfather, uncle, sibling and friend, George is missed by many, especially his wife; their children, Emily, Adrienne, and AJ; and their families.

FRANK PLIMPTON '66 passed away peacefully on April 13, 2025, in Naples, Florida. His death was unexpected and deeply felt by those who knew and loved him. Frank grew up in Sherborn, as the third child of John and Katharine Plimpton, and as a loving brother to three siblings who also attended CRS: **Sam Plimpton '61**, **Jane Plimpton Trusty '63**, and **Jack Plimpton '68**. A gifted student with a lifelong curiosity for learning, Frank went on to Milton Academy and Harvard University, and later earned both his MBA and JD from the University of Chicago. Frank worked as a litigation and bankruptcy lawyer at Milbank Tweed, as an investment banker at Paine Webber and at Salomon Brothers, and as a partner at the private equity firm Matlin Patterson, building a reputation for his intelligence and integrity.

While his professional achievements were many, Frank was most proud of the life he built with his family. He is survived by his beloved wife of nearly 49 years, Kathy (Riley) Plimpton, and their three children: daughter Molly and her husband Montez Haywood; son Andy and his wife Emma; and son CJ and his wife Deniz. Frank was endlessly generous with his time and love, a steady presence in the lives of his family and friends, and someone whose legacy will be felt for generations.

JUDITH QUAGLIAROLI, mother of **Peter '86** and **Jim '88**, passed away in June of 2025. A former member of the CRS Board of Trustees, Judi embodied a life of service, volunteering at numerous educational institutions, healthcare facilities, and charitable organizations. Judi had a successful 27-year career at IBM, where she met her husband, John, and in 1993 she was appointed Executive Director of Management Development Programs at Simmons University School of Management. Judi's lifelong love of sports started as a child, playing with her older brother and watching football and baseball—and faithfully scorekeeping—with her father. As an adult, her joy for sports was reflected in her steadfast sideline support for her sons and grandchildren. She will be remembered for her loyal friendship, generous spirit, and deep commitment to those in need.

NANCY GRINNELL SAYRE '47 passed away on December 18, 2024. Nancy grew up in Dover, and then, prior to the outbreak of World War II, she and her family lived in Beaulieu, England. Upon their return to the US, Nancy attended CRS, Beaver Country Day School, and Colby Junior College (now Colby-Sawyer). Nancy married Wallace A. Underwood of Mattapoisett, MA where they resided. Her second marriage was to Robert H. Sayre whom she met in St. Thomas, USVI. In 1985, Nancy returned to her New England roots and settled into the village life of Marion, MA. Nancy is survived by her daughter Beth Underwood of Mattapoisett; sons Michael A. Underwood of Marion and Robert H. Sayre of Little Compton, RI; granddaughter Gwendolyn Underwood of Warren, RI; and brother Michael Grinnell of Moloka'i, HI. She was predeceased by her son, Peter G. Underwood, and her grandson, Matthew G. Underwood.

JACQUELINE MASON passed away on July 23, 2025. The mother of **Kate Mason '89** and grandmother of **Georgia Hummel '30**, Jackie was a Boston native who was married for more than 50 years to the late Francis C. Mason. Together, they raised six children. Jackie was a graduate of Boston City Hospital School of Nursing, where she won awards for excellence in pediatric nursing. She was active in many charitable organizations and a member of St. Timothy's Church in Westwood, singing in the choir, teaching CCD, and participating in the book club. Jackie was curious about everything and everyone, and remained a lifelong learner. She enjoyed meeting new people and attending classes at BC Institute for Learning in Retirement, lectures at New Pond Village, and performances by the Met and BSO. She was an avid reader of literature and her beloved *Boston Globe*.

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Charles River School students reach their full potential because they are authentically known and valued for who they are. Pictured here, Art Teacher Noelle Pierce and Avery Devaney '34 work together to make a collage.



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