

the CURRENT

PLUS: The Reservoir 2025-26 Report on Annual Giving

THE MAGAZINE OF CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL | FALL 2026

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**CELEBRATING 115 YEARS OF
JOY & ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE**



**CHARLES RIVER
SCHOOL**

BE CURIOUS. BE CONFIDENT. BE KNOWN.

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Celebrating 115 Years of Joy & Academic Excellence

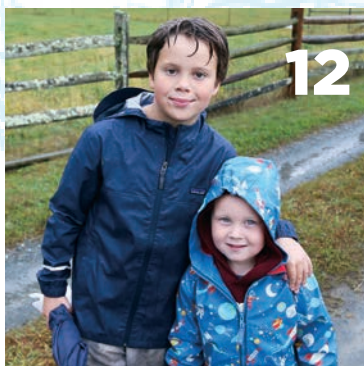
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In support of CRS's commitment to the environment,
The CURRENT is printed on 100% recycled paper.



ON THE COVER

For 115 years, Charles River School's enduring values and beloved traditions have brought students together. From lasting friendships to the CRS Fair and May Day, these experiences continue to define the CRS community across generations.

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

115 Years of Charles River School

In 1911, a Charles River School student was likely to arrive at school on a horse. Radio messages were primarily Morse code. In hospitals, most surgeries were more dangerous than the afflictions themselves with a horrifying risk of infection.

A rare airplane ride for any American felt like science fiction—and yet the plane only flew 50 miles per hour and lasted a few minutes. In business, three companies merged to form the Computing-Tabulating-Recording Company known as CTR. (More on that later.) 1911 was also the peak of “The Great Wave of Immigration.” Between Ellis Island, Angel Island, and other entry points, almost one million immigrants arrived in the United States in 1911 alone.

Just 10 years later, in 1921, that same student was more likely to arrive at school in a car as millions of automobiles were on the road thanks to the assembly line. Voice radio broadcasting had begun, and WBZ in Springfield, MA hit the airwaves. From their own homes, students could listen to the news, live music, and even learn about the latest heroics from former Red Sox star Babe Ruth . . . now as a member of the New York Yankees (Yes, there was an even worse Boston trade than Jaylen Brown to the Philadelphia 76ers.)

By 1921, CRS students had survived the Spanish Flu and medical care had improved significantly. Transfusions, trauma care, and reconstructive surgeries were light-years ahead in terms of safety and effectiveness. By the early 1920s, Thomas J. Watson took those three computing companies and turned them into International Business Machines... that we now know today as IBM. Meanwhile, in 1921, the politics of immigration had changed dramatically, and Congress voted to enact the Emergency Quota Act—imposing numerical restrictions on immigration.

Ten years is a meaningful way to measure time at Charles River School because it is the span of a child's life and growth on campus from age 4 to 14. We also know that these years are the most important ten years in a child's entire education—when children learn how to love learning for the sake of learning itself.

In the very first 10 years of CRS, the technological, economic, and social changes must have felt dizzying to teachers and parents—all of whom were born in the 19th century in the shadow of the Civil War.

They also feel very familiar. Standing on the precipice of our 115th school year at Charles River School, we can easily imagine the unease those four families who founded our beloved school may have been feeling, and also their appreciation for the first teachers who made each child in their care feel known, loved, and challenged. They were preparing students in an era of change and vast uncertainty.

Today, we find ourselves in a similar position, and yet our charge remains the same: to prepare our children to “shape the future of our diverse world with confidence and compassion.”

In this work, we ask ourselves: What will the world look like in 2036? What will be the role of Artificial Intelligence in our lives? What skills will our students need? What tools will be at their disposal? What will the opportunities be? The challenges? What are “the horses” of 2026—the modes of business as usual that will disappear from daily life? Will students all arrive at school in autonomous cars?

The trick for the adults is to have confidence even as we prepare our students to step into the unknown. At Charles River School, we find that confidence in our values about childhood and education. These never waver: Community is essential. Curiosity and creativity are our engines. Deep engagement in work, play, and service are the outcomes we strive for each day. Continuous improvement, for adults and children, is a way of being.

In other words, from 1911 to 2026, we have always been the little school that prepares little people to do big things by earning confidence and attacking problems they have never seen before.



Every year, we work together to be a better version of ourselves, and the 2025–2026 school year was no exception. This issue of *The Current* tells the story of 2025–2026 and celebrates our collective efforts.

We are particularly proud of the significant progress we collectively made in our Strategic Plan: *Forward Together*, now in its second full year of implementation. We did a lot of good work in the spirit of this continuous improvement: We introduced our new math curriculum from PreK–8. We put together a task force of teachers to improve our literacy program in 2026–2027. We created a new alumni council, completed a new Campus Master Plan, and finished a feasibility study for our next Capital Campaign. We created a new homework policy to provide consistent expectations for students, faculty, and families, and we even completed a self-study for our 10-year accreditation visit from the Association of Independent

Schools in New England scheduled for this fall. These pages tell these stories and more about the people—the students, teachers, parents, alumni, and volunteers—who model our values to serve our children and our future.

In our 115th year, we will carry that same spirit forward. We will get down on the floor and at eye level with our four-year-olds, and we will roll up our sleeves right alongside our 14 year-olds as they show us what academic excellence looks like in action. We will sing and solve and dance and design and put our hearts and minds together to support all 190 students.

Like our founders, I can't imagine a better way to spend our days. 🐶

With gratitude,


Gabe



PHOTO BREAK



Our Otters have been busy!

- 1 Grade 4 celebrated their annual Ancient Greek Olympic Games as part of their yearlong thematic study of culture.
- 2 Students began the year with Opening Assembly, featuring a community sing-along and dance to the CRS version of "Pink Pony Club."
- 3 Kindergarten students created 3D models of the CRS campus as part of their Small Voices, Big Impact thematic study.
- 4 CRS hosted Friday Night Lights in partnership with Dedham Country Day School. Student-athletes shined on and off the field.
- 5 Board President Kate Paglia, Treasurer James McElligott, and Head of School Gabe Burnstein presented a State of the School address including a strategic plan progress report.
- 6 Grade 8 embarked on a four-day trip to Alabama and Georgia for the second annual Civil Rights Trip. Reflections and learnings were shared with the community upon their return.



SNAPSHOTS

A GLIMPSE OF OUR YEAR TOGETHER



CAMPUS HAPPENINGS



Grade 3 Grand Canal

GRADE 3 “TRAVELS” TO ITALY as part of their thematic learning along the Silk Routes through southern Asia and Europe, with a focus on the exchange of ideas and goods and how these practices shaped the world we live in both then and now. At the culmination of the project, students created their own version of the Grand Canal in the classroom, featuring palazzos, bridges, and other important buildings in Venice. Families, friends, and community members were invited to explore our miniature Venice and listen to each student share a short presentation about their chosen building, complete with fascinating facts about the city.



Faculty Field Trips

FACULTY AND STAFF began the 2025–2026 school year by getting off campus on their very first day of opening meetings, modeling what we ask of our students when they embark on field trips. Each member of our team leaned into a mix of feelings, including excitement, curiosity, and uncertainty, as they spent the day building community and learning about the mission and core values of six different businesses and nonprofits in Massachusetts and Rhode Island: Father Bill’s & MainSpring, Greater Boston Food Bank, Hasbro, Matouk Linens, Shawmut, and the New England Innocence Project. In line with our “Be Known” tagline, the day provided a meaningful opportunity for faculty to get to know one another as well as the wider community.





Class of 2026 TED Talks

IN THE SPRING, each grade 8 student delivered a TED-style talk to friends, family, and classmates on a topic of their choosing under the overarching theme of “Unsung Heroes,” inspired by their Civil Rights trip.

The talks served as the culmination of their two-year thematic study, Perspectives on Justice. Students were challenged to question and expand upon Julian Bond’s concept of the “master narrative,” uncovering stories that refuse to be oversimplified. Through thoughtful research, compelling storytelling, and confident public speaking, grade 8 students brought overlooked voices and perspectives into the spotlight.

PreK Splat!

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR, PreK students build foundational math skills through playful, hands-on learning. A favorite math game last fall was Splat! Working in pairs, PreK students used five discs and strategy to solve math problems and explain their thinking to their partners. Solving each other’s challenges created great excitement and strong teamwork.



Dr. Pearce Paul Creasman Visit

CRS WAS THRILLED TO WELCOME Dr. Pearce Paul Creasman, world-renowned archaeologist of the Nile and underwater pyramids, to speak with students about *Archaeology of Kings: Diving the Pyramids of Sudan*, sharing stories from his 25 years exploring and documenting ancient tombs.

Dr. Creasman is also a longtime friend of our Director of Athletics, Paul Rupprecht, and we thank Coach Rupprecht for bringing him to campus. Every student walked away as an honorary member of the Pyramid Dive Club.

Dr. Creasman’s parting wisdom to students: “I really like history. I’m curious about it. One day, I hope you find something you love so much you’ll want to do it on the weekends.”



Ms. Worthington's Interdisciplinary Cupcake Project

MS. WORTHINGTON'S LANGUAGE ARTS GROUP

cooked up a way to incorporate their Scientists and Inventions thematic learning into a project with a tasty outcome. Students read *Layla and the Bots: Cupcake Fix*, identifying the main idea in each chapter and creating their own mini books. Inspired by the story, they developed their own hypothesis: Could they design and deliver custom cupcakes to all of first and second grade?

They created a data-collection plan, surveyed classmates and teachers for cupcake orders, and carefully analyzed the results—double-checking totals, identifying trends, and calculating the supplies needed. Next came chemistry. Using their knowledge of mixing types of matter, students precisely measured ingredients, baked custom cupcakes to order in a variety of flavors and toppings, and delivered them proudly. Red velvet with gummy bears was the most popular combination!



Buddy Stories

GRADE 8 STUDENTS WROTE

original picture books, *cuentos infantiles*, based on a topic of their choosing using the story arc of setup, rising action, problem, falling action, and resolution. Students wrote entirely in Spanish, focusing on the present and past tenses of regular and irregular verbs. As a culminating celebration, they invited their Kindergarten buddies to the Middle School for a special bilingual read-aloud. Kindergarteners cozied up, listened intently, and eagerly asked questions about characters and plot.



Grade 4 Sheep Brain Lab

GRADE 4 SCIENTISTS TOOK PART in an experiential learning sheep brain lab with Ms. Kenney as part of their study of the brain. Students compared the sheep brain to the human brain and identified key parts, including the frontal lobe, cerebrum, and amygdala. They also explored the olfactory system, an important sensory system that helps animals detect food and predators. Each student had the opportunity to examine and touch the brain up close.

Observations:

"It feels like a bouncy ball and looks like chewed gum!"

"It's heavier than I expected!"

"The cerebellum is fascinating!"

Grade 5 Math Robots

GRADE 5 STUDENTS APPLIED what they learned from their Illustrative Math volume study to design and build their own robots. They began by sketching robot designs and determining the length, width, and height of each body part. Next, they calculated the total volume by adding the volumes of all individual parts. Using Unifix cubes, students constructed each section of their robot, then created a net (blueprint) for each part on graph paper to bring the body parts to life in 3D. The finishing touch was coloring, decorating, and personalizing their creations.



Multicultural Fair

CRS HOSTED A MULTICULTURAL FAIR in partnership with the Compass Families of Students of Color affinity group and the Community Association to celebrate the many cultures, stories, and traditions that make up the Charles River School community.

Families gathered in Foster Hall for fantastic performances before enjoying a gallery walk of informative and beautiful table displays and appetizers made by CulinArt in the Dining Hall. Shares included a Sri Lankan dance, an overview of the Purim holiday of Judaism, an Indian dance, a Haitian song, a Chinese dance, Korean martial arts, a Bhangra and Bollywood dance, and an East African fashion show.



Student Creations

Built to Roll

Middle School students worked creatively on a three-dimensional design project that challenged their ability to connect form and function. Students designed marble runs with a very specific set of guidelines and a deliberately limited selection of materials. Most notably, all non-decorative parts of their run needed to fit within a 12-inch cube. The ultimate goal, in addition to creating a visually interesting art piece, was to create a track for a marble to run and stay in motion as long as possible. The longest run reached 5 minutes, 47 seconds thanks to a perpetual motion element. 🌀



The Art of Perspective

Grade 4 students created their own 3D art room scene. Each student designed and built a character and piece of scenery and worked together as a team to bring the elements together to take 2D photos. The project allowed students to get a deeper understanding of background, foreground, and middle ground to gauge visual depth and fields of space. Students also built on this knowledge to create a 3D drawing project with relief style images. 🌀



A Lasting Impression

After exploring Acadia's rugged geology on their culminating field trip to the coast of Maine, sixth grade scientists shifted from fieldwork to fine art and enjoyed a printmaking class where they created meaningful pieces inspired by what they learned and loved from their trip. 🌀



What Does It Mean to “**Be Known**” at CRS?

IN THE FALL OF 2025, Charles River School introduced a new marketing messaging framework. It was the culmination of a year of intentional research and message testing, parent and caregiver input, peer-school analysis, and the thoughtful, tireless work of our Community Engagement and Communications Committee.

At its center was a two-word tagline: **Be Known**.

The intention was to capture what makes a Charles River School education distinctive and articulate the experience our students and families know so well. The framework was built around three components that define the CRS student experience: learning how to learn, developing confidence through self-discovery, and belonging to a community where every child is known and valued for exactly who they are.

One year later, *Be Known* has become much more than a tagline.

The phrase has found its way into classrooms, conversations, and everyday life on Old Meadow Road. Teachers have created their own “Be” displays and classroom artwork. Trustees have incorporated the framework into board discussions. Families have shared stories of moments when they felt seen, supported, and understood. Prospective families remark that they keenly understand what *Be Known* means during their first visit to campus.

Most importantly, students have affirmed the meaning of the message. For many, *Be Known* gave words to something they had always felt.

One of the clearest examples came from the Global Majority+ affinity and alliance group. Students created a video exploring diversity, equity, inclusion, and belonging at CRS and presented the video at a Sharing Assembly. They interviewed classmates and teachers across campus, asking what makes our community feel welcoming and connected.

The responses were heartfelt and consistent.

When asked what helps them feel like they belong, one student answered, “People are kind.”

Another explained why equity matters by saying, “Everyone should get what they need.”

When asked what makes CRS a community, a fifth grade student reflected, “When I saw an eighth grader reading to a kindergartener today, that was community.”

Our youngest Otters also understand and embrace what it means to *Be Known* at CRS. When asked how to make someone feel welcome and known, one kindergartener replied, “If someone is new to CRS, you could say, ‘Hey, do you want to be my friend?’”

This theme continued throughout the year.

During May Day, middle school students participated in a panel discussion about what *Be Known* means in their own daily experiences. Again and again, they spoke about advisors and teachers who knew them not only as students, but as people.

One eighth grader shared, “My advisor helped me a lot with my high school applications because she understands what’s meaningful to me. That shows she really knows me.”

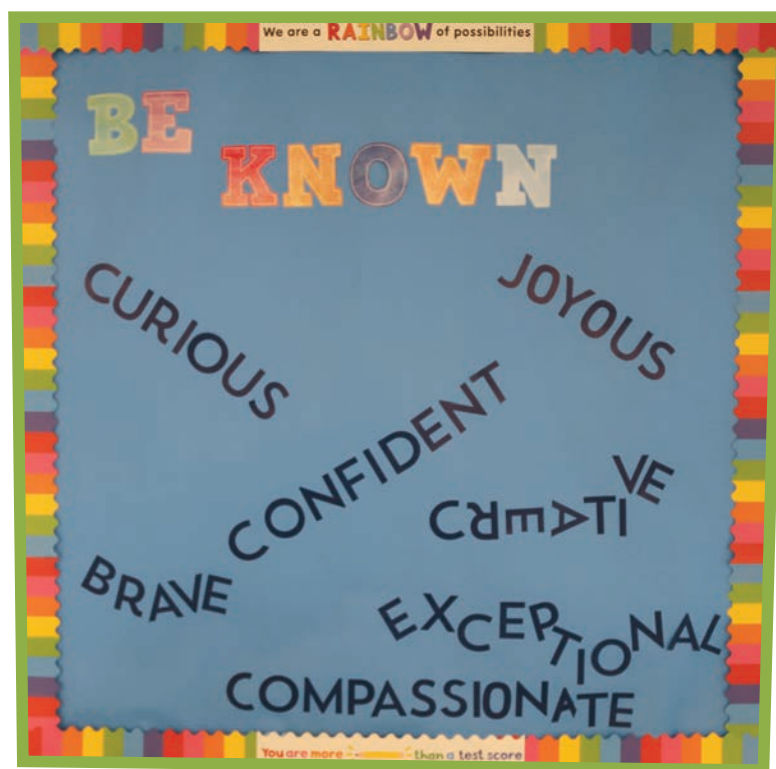
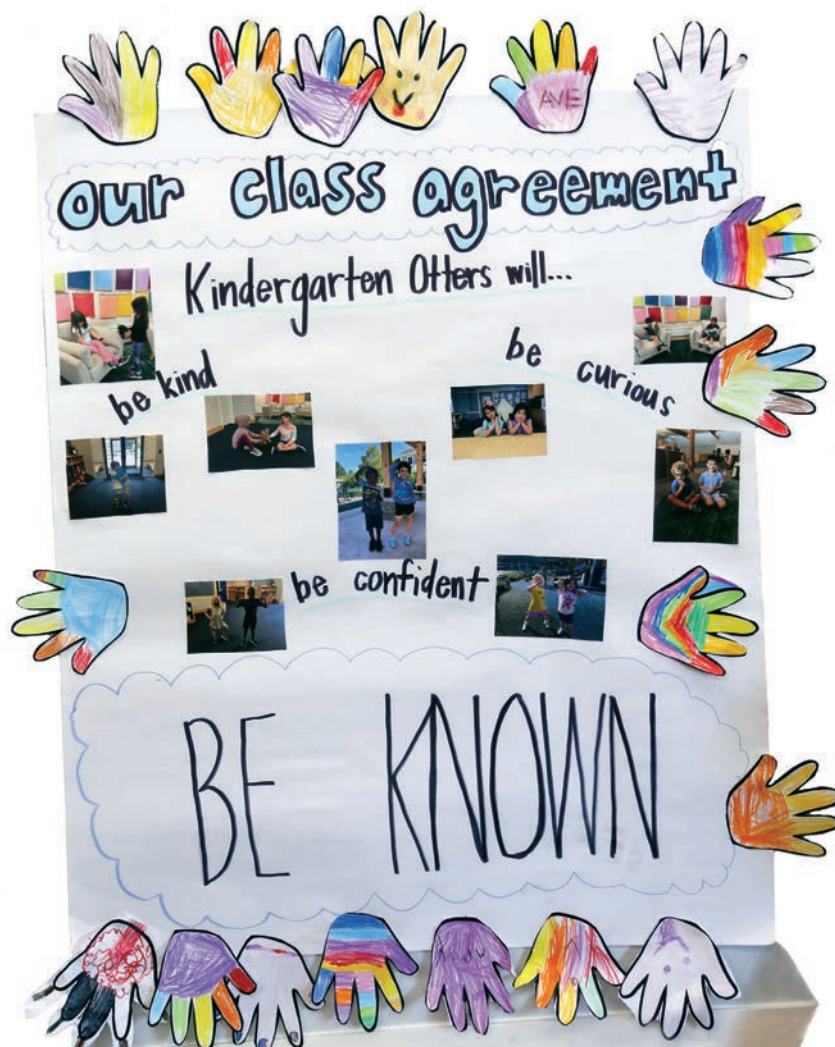
A seventh grader reflected, “My teachers make me feel known, even at lunch, when they sit and talk with us like we’re their friends.”

For a new student, the feeling came almost immediately: “I felt known right away. I’m really included in all of the activities, and everyone acts like I’ve been here forever.”

These moments remind us that *Be Known* has always been part of the Charles River School experience. Academic excellence, confidence, friendship, and belonging have been woven into the fabric of CRS since our founding in 1911. From morning drop-off to the sidelines of an after-school field hockey game, students experience what it means to be known in countless small, meaningful interactions.

The tagline gave our community a shared two-word language for what generations of students, families, faculty, and alumni have long understood: every child deserves to be seen, challenged, celebrated, encouraged, and valued for who they are.

At Charles River School, *Be Known* isn’t just something we say. It’s how we learn, how we lead, and how we care for one another. 🐾



The Human Side of AI

CRS'S COMMITMENT TO THOUGHTFUL TECHNOLOGY USE

By **Steve Trust**, *Director of Technology*

WHILE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) tools are a relatively new development in the education space, particularly the widespread adoption of LLMs (large language models), the use of technology by teachers and students at CRS has a strong history of thoughtful, intentional integration and usage. There will always be new technology for us to investigate and prepare our students to use (coding, makerspaces, multimedia, internet publication, and social media). Embedding our school's values of academic excellence and the joy of childhood ground our pedagogical approach.

For AI in particular, the landscape is changing rapidly based on the pace new modes are being introduced, and bringing with them new capabilities and modes of work. Leading up to the 2025-2026 school year, a group of CRS educators and administrators met to develop responsible AI guidance for faculty and students, create an outline for AI literacy across different age groups, and study best practices from other institutions.

At CRS, AI literacy encompasses understanding AI, using it responsibly, and recognizing its benefits, risks, and ethical implications.

Based on research and our own experience as educators, we developed age-appropriate guidelines for the types of tools and interactions we want to see used with students.

In grades PreK-3, students do not directly interact with LLM chatbots. While there is some early promise in AI tutoring tools, the guardrails are not yet fully in place for young children interacting with AI. In this age range, it is more appropriate for

them to understand that AI is simply a digital tool or “assistant” (Alexa, Siri), and importantly that while it can sound human, it is still a computer and can give incorrect information.

In grades 4-5, we shift the focus to learning about AI in the same context as other digital media literacy such as social media and the internet. We take a “walled garden” approach, using the tools with direct instructor supervision for particular assignments designed to introduce students to the tool, and in the case of AI, using a model specifically trained on data appropriate for student interaction. Examples might include asking the AI to interact as a historical figure, or a character in a book, as a way for students to gain greater context and a deeper understanding of their motivations.

In grades 6-8, the curriculum shifts

to directly using AI tools both for an understanding of how they are used in the real world for work, and how to use them responsibly. In middle school, the recommendation is for teachers to put in clear, specific AI guidance per assignment/unit of study. In education, many types of student work are explicitly designed to develop an underlying conceptual framework for long term understanding, and bypassing that learning for a quick solution can lead to long term misconceptions and a lack of critical thinking. To prevent this, we adopted a “stoplight” framework for AI guidance, with a “red light” indicating no AI usage is permitted and that this assignment is important for learning, a “yellow light” means AI can be used with specific permissions from the teacher, and a “green light” meaning students are encouraged or expected to use AI tools.





AI in Action

The opening units of our grade 6 technology curriculum provide a window into our pedagogical approach to AI at CRS. We begin by giving students historical context about machine learning and explain how large datasets are used to train AI models for specific tasks. Students first train an image recognition model to play “rock, paper, scissors” using their own hands. They quickly discover that factors such as lighting, camera angles, backgrounds, and the diversity of training images dramatically affect a model’s accuracy.

We then shift to facial expression recognition, asking students to train models to identify emotions such as happy, sad, angry, or bored. This activity introduces not only how AI works, but also how bias can be introduced through training data. Students soon realize that models trained on a limited group of classmates often fail when presented with people who have different physical characteristics. Many try to improve their models by collecting more training images, only to encounter the practical and ethical challenges of obtaining enough high-quality data without simply copying classmates’ work or pulling images from the internet.

These experiences naturally lead to class discussions about the ethical implications of AI, including bias and discrimination, data privacy, misinformation, and other issues society is actively grappling with. Later in

the year, students apply AI tools in multimedia, coding, and other curricular projects while continuing to examine questions of creativity, authorship, and the future of work.

In grades 7 and 8, Social Studies Teacher and Secondary School Director Tessa Steinert Evoy built custom AI bots this past school year. She created SSAT AI Tutors for test preparation and a “Colonial History Helper” for the humanities curriculum. The latter tool was integrated into our Witness Stones Project to help students evaluate primary source documents and reconstruct historical narratives. These tutoring tools were created to guide students through questioning techniques, rather than simply give them answers.

As we continue to explore the possibilities of AI and other emerging technologies, our goal at CRS remains the same: to help students grow as curious, capable, and conscientious learners who can navigate a rapidly changing world with confidence and creativity. By grounding our approach in both innovation and our enduring values, we ensure that technology serves as a tool for deeper understanding rather than a shortcut around it. Our goal is to prepare our students not just to use AI, but to think critically about its impact and to shape its future responsibly. ©

The Show Goes On

A look at the Grade 8 production of ***Frozen Jr.*** and the lasting impact of the performing arts at Charles River School.

THE CRS MUSICAL, presented in many shapes and sizes throughout our history, is a longstanding school tradition. The Grade 8 Musical is the culminating MultiArts performance for the graduating class. This year, the Class of 2026, with support from grade 7 students through set and costume design as well as group performances, transformed Foster Hall into an arctic wonderland and brought *Frozen Jr.* to the stage.

The journey to the Musical begins long before eighth grade. Along the way, every CRS student has many opportunities to perform on stage and develop their creativity as part of their educational experience. Beginning in PreK with Sharing Assemblies, May Day, and Winter Festival, these experiences expand each year, giving students many opportunities for public speaking and performance. Students in grades 3–5 participate in Communication Presentation (known as Comm Pres), grade 6 take part in 6th and Broadway, and students in grades 7 and 8 explore multiple MultiArts units, including dance. These are just a few of the many ways CRS nurtures confidence, creativity, and compassion from the earliest years.

As we celebrate our 115th anniversary, we're shining a light on alumni who have continued to pursue singing, acting, dancing, and the creative arts after Charles River School. 🎭



Sam Gerrish '26 as Olaf, Michaela Laguerre '26 as Elsa, Abby Baldwin '26 as Anna, and Henry Rico '26 as Kristoff



Connor Lynch '26 as Sven



Lilah Branton '26 as young Anna





Nico Gaybor '23,
The Lion King

Nico Gaybor '23

**Student at The Wheeler School,
Rhode Island**

"From spending time rocking out in the middle school band, to serenading my community in the chorus, CRS fostered my love for performing and singing with compassion and unending support. I've been taught to let my voice ring out and to not lower my creative volume, and I thank CRS, Ms. Moellering, and Sarah Clancy for nurturing my passion and supporting me through my development. My experiences on the stage, whether learning and singing songs in a foreign language or sharing our original piece written by a group of like-minded musicians just days before my graduation, cultivated a new appreciation and dedication to vocal performance. I now sing with the 18 Wheelers at The Wheeler School, participate in my school's winter musicals, and perform as part of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's Youth Vocalists Program. Alongside recording with the 18 Wheelers, I have also recorded a few covers of my own."

Jillian Rothman '14,
*Once Upon
a Mattress*



Jillian Rothman '14

Graduate Student, New York City

"My educational career was deeply shaped by creativity, especially through the MultiArts curriculum at CRS, which gave me the freedom to be myself, take risks, and discover my passions. As a shy student who also had ADD and dyslexia, I often struggled to speak in front of others, but I found confidence through my MultiArts classes, which provided me with an expressive outlet. The early exposure at CRS inspired me to continue my artistic journey at Walnut Hill School for the Arts and later at Connecticut College, where I studied theater at a pre-professional level. Although I am no longer performing as often, the skills I developed, especially confidence and creative problem-solving, continue to influence my work today as a master's student in Event Management at New York University. I look back very fondly on my theater days at CRS and give my teachers a great amount of credit for helping the quiet girl find her voice."



**Malik Gomes
Cruz '15,**
*Seussical
the Musical*



Malik Gomes Cruz '15

**Performing arts advocate and dance
scholar, Washington D.C.**

"My interest in the arts—music, dance, and acting—began at CRS, where those passions were deeply nurtured. I was encouraged to take risks and write music, play in a band with friends, and, of course, take the stage as the Cat in the Hat in *Seussical the Musical*. That early passion eventually blossomed into a professional career in dance and the arts. Today, I spend my time on stages in front of audiences and behind the scenes supporting the work of other artists. None of it would have been possible without the incredible CRS teachers and peers who cultivated my creativity, allowing it to grow."

Sixth Grade: “Scampering” toward Creative Risks and Rewards

By Chris MacDonald, Grade 6 Humanities Teacher

“**READ IT AGAIN! READ IT AGAIN!”** I can almost hear the echoes of my sixth grade students when they were pre-schoolers. On a table in the sixth grade Humanities (English and social studies) classroom sits a small, familiar pile of children’s picture books. You’d think they were simple books, but they’re actually not. Their covers are bright, their sentences clean, their patterns predictable in the way the best children’s stories are. But inside each one is a kind of specialized machine, parts that work together to create memories and inspire what kids think about life and the world around them: characters, conflicts, rules, rhythms, choices, consequences. A story’s engine turns because all of its pieces are working together. There’s comfort in the hum of predictability of a favorite story book.

∴ RECORD SCRATCH ∴ REMIX. That favorite story? *Recreate it.* Without destroying the essence, make a fundamental change or two to create something new from something old. That’s what I ask students to do in sixth grade. Rigorous learning experiences with real-world application are at the heart of authentic learning. Will most middle school students write stories as a career? Unlikely. Will most middle school students’ careers involve problem solving, idea generation, and collaboration? Absolutely.

Enter SCAMPER, a divergent thinking and problem solving technique first featured in *Thinkertoys* by Michael Michalko (2006). SCAMPER stands for *Substitute, Combine, Adapt, Minimize/Maximize, Put to Another Use, Eliminate, and Rearrange/Reverse*. These verbs are powerful tools that all are synonymous with change. To students, the language of SCAMPER is playful, almost like a menu of mischief. Each word is a doorway. Substitute the hero. Reverse the ending.



Chris MacDonald, Grade 6 Humanities Teacher, and members of the Class of 2028

Working on Wellbeing

The Launch of WOW

at Charles River School

By **Dorothy Gregoire**, *Assistant Head of School for Teaching, Learning, and Equity*

ONE OF THE GREATEST PRIVILEGES of working in a school is witnessing students grow, not only as learners, but also as people. At Charles River School, we have long understood that academic excellence is strengthened when students feel known, supported, and equipped with the skills to understand themselves and others. During the 2025-2026 school year, our commitment took on a new and exciting form with the launch of Working on Wellbeing (WOW), our new social-emotional learning curriculum.

School Nurse Rachel Jackson, School Counselor Jennine Ballew, and I developed WOW collaboratively. We created a comprehensive, developmentally appropriate program that addresses identity, leadership, health, wellness, social development, growth education, and human development.

As Jennine explains, “We combined the recommended framework from the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) with the International School Counselor Association scope and sequence to create the most comprehensive and developmentally appropriate approach to SEL learning for CRS students.” The curriculum is intentionally designed to spiral across grade levels, revisiting important concepts each year while adding greater depth as students

Kindergarteners
enjoy a Friendship
Tea gathering
with Nurse Rachel
Jackson and School
Counselor Jennine
Ballew.





mature. Just as importantly, our WOW curriculum remains responsive throughout the year. We partner closely with classroom teachers to adapt lessons and address students' emerging social, emotional, and developmental needs as they arise.

The WOW curriculum aligns directly with our school mission of knowing ourselves and understanding others. Students explored both of these essential ideas throughout the year with engaging lessons and hands-on activities.

I enjoyed leading lessons through which students examined identity and leadership. One such project was the "Culture Jar," in which students reflected on the many experiences, traditions, interests, and communities that shape who they are. Another meaningful unit, "The History of We," introduced students to humanity's shared history and encouraged them to reflect on how their own identities connect to a larger human story. The lesson emphasized that, while our backgrounds and experiences may differ, we are all part of one human race, and each of us has the power to contribute positively to the future.

Rachel Jackson and Jennine Ballew led lessons focused on health, wellness, emotional regulation, and social development. Students engaged with Kelso's Choices and the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence's RULER

curriculum, learning practical strategies for managing conflicts, recognizing emotions, and responding thoughtfully to challenging situations.

When reflecting on the first year of WOW, Rachel said, "I love the impact. We cover a wide variety of mental health and social needs. Introducing students to everything from mental health to identity helps them become well-rounded. It also allows us to interact with students and build relationships, so when they need support later, they already know us outside of our office roles."

One of the highlights of the year was our first Mental Health Awareness Week, organized by the WOW team. The week transformed wellbeing into a visible, school-wide celebration. Students created kindness rocks that now form a colorful rock garden on campus, participated in activities focused on feelings and affirmations, practiced mindfulness, shared gratitude, and celebrated connection. The activities reinforced an important message: we all need to take care of our mental health, just as we do our physical health.

The launch of WOW has already had a profound impact on our students and our school culture. It has created spaces for meaningful conversations, strengthened connections between students and support staff, and provided children with practical

tools they can use both in and out of the classroom.

Perhaps the most meaningful measure of the program's success came directly from our students. When Head of School Gabe Burnstein asked a sixth-grade student, "What is something that you know now that you didn't know at the beginning of the year?" the student replied, "I know a lot more about my body and my feelings than I used to." That simple statement captures exactly why WOW matters.

Social-emotional learning is not an "extra" at Charles River School—it is a foundational element that supports every aspect of student growth. When students learn to recognize their emotions, understand their identities, care for their health, build healthy relationships, and practice empathy, they become stronger learners, stronger leaders, and stronger community members.

As we look ahead, we are excited to continue building on this work. The success of WOW reminds us that when we intentionally invest in wellbeing, we are not only helping students navigate the challenges of childhood and adolescence—we are helping them develop the confidence, compassion, resilience, and self-awareness that will benefit them long after CRS, into every future classroom, friendship, workplace, and community they join. 🐸

The View from the Den

Life as Editor
of *The Otter's Couch*

By Nolan Newmark '27, 2025-2026
Student Newspaper Editor-in-Chief

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN AN **OTTER** sitting on a couch? Probably not, but if you dropped by Charles River School's Travis Middle School Building on a Friday between 1:45 and 3:00pm, you would see seven of them. Don't worry, these aren't river otters, these are Charles River School Otters working on the next edition of *The Otter's Couch*, the middle school's student-run newspaper, which was started in 2023.

The Otter's Couch is fully authored, led, and designed by students. It meets during the Friday elective block. The newspaper has two faculty advisors who serve as sounding boards while students brainstorm ideas and then the students create their own intriguing articles. The 2025-2026 winter issue of the newspaper focused on creative writing and art at CRS. One *Otter's Couch* writer said, "I was really interested in joining the newspaper because I love to write. When I heard about the creative art edition I was really excited."

Past issues of *The Otter's Couch* reported more broadly on all aspects of CRS and included articles on a variety of topics ranging from



creative pieces about spiders found on the playground to the creation of kindness rocks spreading happiness throughout our school.

I have been a member of *The Otter's Couch* team for two years and this year I am the editor-in-chief. The first-ever issue of *The Otter's Couch* was presented at an all-school assembly as a digital slide show. In 2024, the newspaper was published as a Google site so that the CRS student body could easily access it on demand. We also share it on social media with our wider community.

Our newspaper is meaningful to all of the student writers and contributors because of the assortment of opportunities that it offers. The paper allows the members to expand their writing, tell the story of our school from the student perspective, and also learn and research a lot about CRS. We hope you will read our next edition of *The Otter's Couch*, and lastly, Go Otters! 🦉



Julie Weeden, Ian Brassard '19, Ben Jackson '19, and Kat Whitten reunite for Sports Day



Many alumni gather on the stage at Winter Festival to lead the closing community song with faculty and staff



Lily Maley '25 and her Buddy Avery '34 catch up on the playground

Alumni on Old Meadow Road

There's nothing better than seeing alumni back on campus!

Add our 2026-2027 upcoming events to your calendar!

Friday Night Lights @ Dedham Country Day
Friday, Oct. 2, 2026

CRS Fair
Saturday
Oct. 24, 2026

Winter Festival
Friday
Dec. 18, 2026

May Day
Friday
May 7, 2027

Sports Day
Friday
May 28, 2027

If you'd like visit to CRS to see the latest on campus, please reach out to alumni@charlesriversschool.org.

Members of the Class of 2025 share dinner before cheering on CRS's production of *Frozen Jr*. First row: Sam Murphy, Max Murphy, Cole Marino, Emre Zisfein-Shea, Eleanor Haber, Tenley Rogers, Lauren McElligott
Second row: Theodore Lee, Jonah Mathew, Silas Williams, Timmy Williams

Dom Culbreath '24 embraces his former teacher Mica Moellering at the Class of 2026's graduation reception



Celebrating 115 Years of Charles River School

FORWARD-THINKING, ALWAYS



Students at Charles River Village schoolhouse



Class of 1930 on Founders House stairs

FOR 115 YEARS, CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL has championed academic excellence and the joy of childhood. While our campus, programs, and community have evolved significantly over the years, the values that inspired our founders remain unchanged: a dedication to exceptional teaching, student-centered experiential learning, deep parent and caregiver partnership, and a steadfast commitment to preparing the school for generations of students to come.

A brief look back at history

Charles River School's roots date back to 1911, when four like-minded families founded the school on a small farm in Needham, Massachusetts. They wanted to be active partners in their children's education, a defining characteristic of CRS that continues today, and envisioned a collaborative, nurturing school community where children could learn and be challenged.

From the beginning, our founders established core principles that would shape the school's future:

- Offer a strong academic program
- Advance moral learning

- Lead innovation in education
- Instill a lifelong love of learning

These principles continue to guide Charles River School more than a century later.

In the school's first year, eight students enrolled. By 1913, CRS had moved to a larger home located in Needham's Charles River Village to accommodate its growing community. At the time, the school served students from Kindergarten through grade 5 and graduated its first class of four students in 1916.

In the spring of 1917, a fire burned down the Needham schoolhouse, prompting CRS to relocate to 56 Centre Street in Dover, Massachusetts—the campus we still call home today! The original Victorian house on the property, now known as Founders House, remains a cherished reminder of our early years. (Read on to see how Founders has evolved over the years.)



Present day Founders House

Although the campus has grown significantly over the decades, alumni from our early years in Dover remembered many of the same qualities that students enjoy today: a close-knit community, joyful exploration, and learning that extended far beyond the classroom.



Winona Algie, first Headmistress



Vera Howell frequently rode her horse to school

“The pupils of those early days remember with pleasure the home-like house and the old barn with stalls, hayloft and chicken houses, ideal for all sorts of games, plays, assemblies, and other school activities. There was an apple orchard and a large hill directly behind the farmhouse which was happily used for many years for sledding.” (*Excerpted from Charles River School, A History written by Mimi Earley P ’81 ’83 ’86, Former Director of Admissions*)

In 1917, Winona K. Algie became the first Headmistress, a position she would hold for 30 years until her retirement in 1947. Ms. Algie also taught classes and was remembered as a kind, firm administrator who believed Charles River School students should grow into thoughtful leaders in the wider world.

“At CRS, we have always known what we stand for. As our school community continues to grow and evolve, we have grounded our work in our enduring values: curiosity, creativity, compassion, and confidence. We plan for an unknown future, and prepare our students to shape it.”

GABE BURNSTEIN P’30 ’30 ’34, HEAD OF SCHOOL

From our earliest days, Charles River School balanced forward thinking with timeless educational values. Students learned by doing, explored the outdoors, and formed close relationships within a community that welcomed families from multiple towns.

Daily life looked quite different a century ago. Students walked to school or arrived by horse and buggy, horseback, phaeton, sleigh, and only occasionally by automobile. Dover students often walked long distances to CRS and, during the winter months, stopped at neighbors’ homes along the way to warm up.

Teachers also often traveled significant distances to Charles River School. For a time, the railroad ran through Dover, and teachers often took the train from Needham or Boston. When snow prevented trains from traveling beyond Needham, an old “pung” (a one-horse box sleigh with wooden benches) transported teachers the rest of the way to Needham Junction.

Today, families commute to CRS from 30 cities and towns, and our faculty and staff represent an equally broad geographic area. Our 16-acre campus has expanded far beyond Founders House.

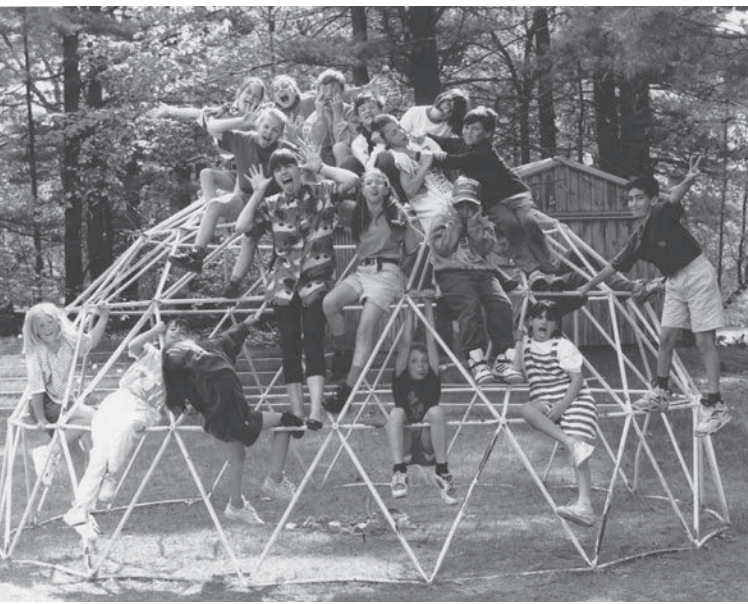
Evolution of Campus

The physical spaces at CRS have evolved throughout the past 115 years to meet the needs of the school. Increased enrollment, developing technology, and best practices in education have served as the impetus for new buildings. In 1960, the Middle Building opened as the second building on campus, with classrooms for our youngest students and a space for plays, assemblies, and special events such as graduation. This was replaced in 2003 with the current Early Childhood Building.



Middle Building, 1965

COVER STORY



Third graders enjoy outdoor play in 1994



Present day playground ribbon cutting, fall 2023

The Community Building (formerly known as the Main Building) was constructed in 1970 and has undergone renovations so that it continues to be a modern environment for classrooms, administrative offices, the library, and Foster Hall, our performance and assembly space. The Activity Center built upon the existing gymnasium in 2007 and added much-needed locker rooms, team rooms, offices, and a beautiful dining room and kitchen.

In 2018, the Travis Middle School welcomed students from grades 6-8 into its state-of-the-art classrooms, flexible breakout spaces, and central atrium which serves as a gathering point for middle school students. Outdoor spaces, as well, have expanded to include the Wetlands Laboratory, two athletic fields, the Community Garden, the outdoor Pavilion, and a completely renovated and ADA-compliant playground.

A constant throughout the years has been Founders House, the original building on our Dover campus. Purchased in 1917 for \$6,000, the Victorian-style home has undergone many iterations and is still an integral part of the school. From its origins as the sole schoolhouse (with an attached barn), Founders House and its numerous additions have, at various times, contained the school's library (Saltonstall Library was added in 1937), the art room, administrative offices, rooms for instrumental music lessons, and the dining room.

When CRS added 7th and 8th grades in the early 1970s, Founders House became the center of the program and decades of middle school students fondly recall the cozy classrooms and charm of the building. In the midst of the COVID pandemic in 2020, the first floor was converted into a spacious nursing suite, allowing CRS to reopen its doors safely while navigating a once-in-a-century public health crisis.

As Charles River School celebrates 115 years, we continue to honor the vision of our founders by embracing innovation while remaining grounded in the values that have defined CRS for many decades. Academic excellence, the joy of childhood, and a deeply connected community have always been at the heart of CRS, and we look ahead with excitement as we continue planning for both today's students and generations to come. 🐾



Students reading in the Saltonstall Library



Original dining room in Founders



PreK students, along with their teachers Ms. Bear and Ms. Horsch, designed an art piece made of precisely 115 letters. Each student created the letters, spelling words that reflected their year, including “joyful,” “excellent,” and “friendship.”

From the Perspective of Our Students

To celebrate our anniversary, current students creatively wrote about one moment, memory, lesson, relationship, or hope that shows what CRS means to them. The challenge? Write it in exactly 115 words.

IN 115 WORDS, I want to remember the moment when I learned long division. I remember in 4th grade I was having a hard time in math. I was really frustrated, and wanted to give up until I went over the steps and realized why I was doing it wrong. I decided to focus more in class that day with my two teachers, and I did the long division right. I remember feeling like I should win a medal because I was so excited that I finally learned! I continued studying long division and getting it right for another few days. A couple days later, we changed units. Then I had to learn about fractions.

— REAGAN CALDWELL '28

I'M NEW THIS YEAR TO CRS. I remember the free throw contest during Sports Day, people cheering the next person on. Every time someone on your team would make a shot, you would cheer louder. Working as a team, having fun while trying to win. At the end, I happened to hit the last shot and we were tied. I made it. Everyone went crazy, and people gathered in a circle and all started celebrating. Everyone on our team was happy, and I was, too. This moment stands out during my time at CRS so far. It represents the community and how everyone is always trying to help each other. All just enjoying the game.

— HENRY ZELIG '28

I LOVE TRADITIONS AT CRS

There are many traditions at CRS
Here are some I think are best
Assemblies, Winter Festival, and May Day
We sing and dance and laugh and play
There are new and old things we do each year
We always support, we always cheer
Sports Day is always very fun
Full of lots of games and a ton of sun
The competition is great
And there is a debate
Which team is the best
Gold and Blue cheer without rest
Field trips to places new and old that we love
Like Farm School and beaches with the sun up above
The zoo and aquariums all of this makes you see
How awesome CRS really can be.

— CAROLINE WILLARD '29

Alumni Reflections

As part of our anniversary celebration, we are looking back at favorite memories from our alumni community. No matter when they graduated, alumni recollections are vivid, personal, and joyful.

“I loved Charles River School from the moment I first stepped foot in it. Most of the teachers— Mrs. Pierce, Miss Algie, Mrs. Rice, and others—had taught my mother. There was no pulling the wool over their eyes, but I also felt an immediate warmth from them. In my day, Charles River was still in the same early Victorian house that my mother attended. On one side was a stone wall and cemetery rising up over a hill. Behind the school building the hill came quite steeply down, perfect for winter sledding.”

ANNE (NANCY) FARLOW MORRIS '50

DAUGHTER OF CATHERINE TAPPAN FARLOW 1926 (WRITTEN IN 2008)



Juliet Thompson Hochman '81 (third from left) completes baton hand off in Sports Day relay race in 1976

“Sports Day was always my favorite! Blue vs. Gold. I loved all of the events, from the high jump to leaping into the sandpit to the 50-yard dash. CRS had so many memorable and inspiring teachers, including Peter Ruscitto, Nick Noyes, Joan Marzelak, Jane Detenber, and Carolyn Peirce. I remember more of my teachers from CRS than I do from Harvard—so much more impactful!”

JULIET THOMPSON HOCHMAN '81

“In the 1920s there was one school building and a barn and a couple of hen houses. It was almost like a farm then. The boys' school day was from 8:30 am to 3:00 pm. Girls would only go until one o'clock unless they were taking sports. Miss Algie was the Headmistress and my favorite teacher was Miss Whittemore. My favorite classes were geography and history.”

ROBERT FULLER 1920

(INTERVIEWED IN 1979 BY TRINKA HAMILTON VINACCO '80)

“My favorite spot on campus: the Grandparents' Day playground (as it was then known) adjacent to the Old Building, which I associate with 7/8 silliness and conversations with friends. I loved the 5th grade sword dance, which I'll still sometimes use as a random fun fact.”

JULIA H. CAIN '99

“For many years, sixth grade studied the whaling industry and went on a week-long field trip to Nantucket to stay at the youth hostel. My class went in October of 1986. Chaperoned by Robin Putnam, Paula Converse, and a few parents, my mom included, we brought our bikes and rode all over the island, had bonfires on the beach every night with Paula playing guitar, and got to go to the Whaling Museum and the Maria Mitchell House. We picked articles at the museum to draw and when we returned home, we made packs of notecards from our drawings to sell as a fundraiser for the trip. I still have several of these in my possession.”

KATE MASON '89



“When reflecting back on my ten years at CRS, there are so many moments that I remember fondly; however, playing the role of JoJo in “Seussical” (with a solo!) was one of the most influential moments at CRS and a culmination of the support and care that the school and all of the amazing teachers provided me. For the longest time, I only saw myself as an athlete whose moment to shine was during recess playing football or during the relay race on Sports Day. The role of JoJo enabled me to challenge myself outside of what I knew I was capable of. Years later, I still think back to my experience in the musical as a reminder to continue to say yes to new (and at times daunting) opportunities, continuously look for ways to grow, and find people and a community who will support and encourage me.”

CHRIS CHEN '15

“When I think back on my years at Charles River School, what comes to mind first is how alive learning felt. In first grade, our study of the Middle Ages was pure magic. We turned the Loft [Community Building space] into a castle, everyone had a role to play, and we prepared pomegranate chicken for the banquet. I can still remember the special dance we practiced and how seriously we all took our ‘jobs’ for the feast. It was the kind of immersive learning that stays with you. CRS was a wonderful place to grow up, and I’m deeply grateful for the education, perspective, and community it gave me. The friendships have lasted just as long as the lessons. Shout-out to Brooke Earley Asnis ‘86 who’s been a constant in my life since those early days.”

ANNA HOFFMAN '86

Igniting Curiosity: CRS Rocketry Lab

By **Lisa Balazs**,
Grade 7 and 8 Science Teacher

“Clear!”

“3-2-1...”

SNAP! WHOOOOOSH!

“Do you see it?”

“It went so high! Where is the parachute? There it is...oh no, it is heading for the trees!”

“My rocket landed. Can we relaunch it? That went way faster than I thought it would!”

THE FIRST TIME I BUILT and launched a model rocket, I was a young teacher attending Space Academy for Educators in Alabama. We, of course, tied the activity to science and math standards. We talked about Johannes Kepler, Robert Goddard and Sir Isaac Newton — the pioneers and principles that shaped modern rocketry. But no one could prepare me for the thrill of that first rocket launch. I was hooked.

I brought that experience back to my middle school students that year, and have included it in my curriculum every year since that first summer!

Why is rocketry an important addition to a middle school curriculum at CRS?

First, as clearly demonstrated in the student quotes above, rocketry is fun, unpredictable, surprising, and exhilarating.

Second, it is the perfect end to the physics units both seventh and eighth grade students tackled after spring recess at CRS. Students calculate the liftoff speed, understand thrust and force, estimate the maximum height of the flight, and analyze any launch errors.

Third, these types of classroom activities (those that involve engineering, understanding design, math and science concepts that are intertwined), are part of a demanding science curriculum.

Lastly, and most importantly, engaging in rocketry supports the CRS mission statement, “We nurture each child by igniting curiosity, encouraging creativity, and cultivating intellectual engagement.”

“Igniting curiosity” with rocketry (no pun intended!):

- How does a parachute work differently than the streamer system?
- How do we calculate the height, initial speed, and flight time of the rocket?
- How much force does the rocket engine exert?

Henry Rico '26
and **Lisa Balazs**,
Grades 7 & 8
Science Teacher



- Does it matter where the fins are placed, or if there are fewer or more fins?

“Encouraging creativity” with rocketry:

- My rocket is named _____.
- I am painting my rocket ombre.
- I am painting my rocket so it looks like an animal/basketball player/performer.

Curious and creative students are eager to solve the problems that connect mathematical skills to real-world scientific applications. I have students who want to build bigger rockets and explore what happens when you change the variables of mass, booster thrust, or fin shape. I also have students who become interested in exploring aerodynamics and applying that knowledge to their upcoming science fair projects.

Rocketry opens doors for students to explore advanced math concepts, learn engineering, and to *be* scientists. Students everywhere deserve engaging and challenging learning experiences. I am grateful that I am encouraged to create these experiences at CRS. I have a feeling that our future scientists are hooked, too. 🚀

Penny Brown '26 and
Haley DePina-Holmes '26



SPORTS

SPORTS DAY
BUILDING COMMUNITY
THROUGH TRADITION

Students from PreK-8 enjoyed a picture-perfect Sports Day day filled with cooperative games with Buddies, friendly competition, and fierce school spirit. Events included the long jump, catapult, 40-yard dash, relays, and more. Blue and Gold creativity, joy, and teamwork defined the day. For the first time since 2010, we ended with a tie!



Paige Leahy '27, Emerson Devaney '35 and Michaela Laguerre '26 decked out for team Gold



Marigold Fogg '34

Sarah Black '26 heads to the finish line to close out the relays



Tobias Lopez-Baldrich '29 hops in the sack race



Mia Gurung '29, Ms. Duffy, and Lexi Engle '29



Beau Roller '30 gives it his all in the long jump



Buddies Abby Straus '32 and Tess Rico '29 race in hurdles



AJ Faricelli '30 competes in the grade 4 relay race



Co-Teachers Ms. Leone and Mr. Hertzberg

Sports Day began with a special Dover Fire Department firetruck arrival for Kat Whitten and the Glaeseman family, who were welcomed by CRS Early Birds in celebration of Kat's final Sports Day as a CRS employee



FRIDAY NIGHT LIGHTS

The second annual Friday Night Lights event, held in partnership with Dedham Country Day School, transformed Old Meadow Road into a spirited evening of competition, community, and school pride. Seeing CRS glow under the lights was truly something special. Otters showcased tremendous skill, joy, teamwork, and sportsmanship in field hockey, soccer, flag football, and cross country, while our community showed up in full force to cheer them on.



Celebrating Our Student Athletes

We were thrilled to welcome alumni back to campus to celebrate our student-athletes and relive their favorite CRS memories at the event. Lara Do Rosario '22 served as an honorary alumni captain and joined Director of Athletics Paul Rupprecht for the coin toss. After graduating from CRS, Lara was a standout in cross country, basketball, and track and field at Winsor School and will attend Georgetown University this fall.



Scan the code to see an aerial video of the FNL action captured by Matt Murphy P'25 '25 '29.

Then + Now



Celebrating 115 years of Charles River School with a throwback to the CRS football team of 1912 . . .



. . . and the 2025-2026 flag football team.

ALUMNI ATHLETES

Jonah Mathew '25

“Cross country at Charles River School is open to students in grades 4–8. For some athletes, this is their first time participating on a school team and, for many, their first experience with cross country. It is a unique sport because while there is team scoring, there is no starting lineup or A and B teams. Every runner starts together and has the opportunity to race on the same course.

Cross country teaches valuable lessons in goal-setting, pacing, mental toughness, and the rewards of hard work. I love watching our runners build confidence and carry those lessons into other aspects of their lives at CRS.

Last fall, I had the opportunity to watch Jonah Mathew '25 compete for Medway High School at the Tri-Valley League meet. Jonah's experience at CRS gave him the confidence to join the team in high school, and it was great to follow his growth throughout the season.”

—Tara Jennings, Development Assistant and Cross Country Coach



Tara Jennings cheers on Jonah Mathew '25

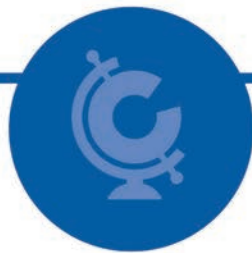


Trevor McDonald '17

Trevor McDonald '17 graduated this past spring from Trinity College, where he was a four-year starter in the forward position and an integral part of the 2025 NCAA Division III Men's Basketball National Championship team. He earned a Bachelor of Science in psychology and was selected as the senior speaker for Trinity College's 200th Commencement ceremony. Addressing his 549 classmates, Trevor spoke about the importance of gratitude in the face of obstacles.



Sam Gerrish '26
shares "The Book of"



Maya Engle '26 and
Michaela Laguerre '26

CONGRATULATIONS graduates

— CLASS OF 2026 —





Class of 2026 tiles



Stephen Barton '26 and coach Billy Beazile



Brennan Judge '26 and advisor Sarah Clancy



Adam Soufiane '26 performs "Let it Be"

CRS "End-to-Enders" Michaela Laguerre '26, Haley DePina-Holmes '26, and Lilah Branton '26



Members of the Class of 2026 enjoy a few laughs before the ceremony



Adia Rollings '26 performs "I Know Things Now"

Class of 2026 sings "Time of Your Life" by Greenday

Penny Brown '26



2026 GRADUATES



Abby
Baldwin



Haley
DePina-Holmes



Taylor
Knott



Stephen
Barton



Maya
Engle



Michaela
Laguerre



Isaiah
Bertrand



Sam
Gerrish



Connor
Lynch



Sarah
Black



Nyla
Greenaway



Henry
Rico



Lilah
Branton



Jordan
Gregory



Adia
Rollings



Penny
Brown



Brennan
Judge



Adam
Soufiane

2025 Matriculation

Beaver Country Day School

Brooks School

Cambridge School of Weston

Chapel Hill Chauncey Hall

Commonwealth School

Concord Academy

Dana Hall School

Dexter Southfield School

Gann Academy

Loomis Chaffee

Natick High School

Rivers School

Thayer Academy

Wellesley High School

Westover School

Community Events



Tatiana Collis P'28 '31, Kate Dow P'28 '30 '31, Christiana Stevenson P'28 '33, Leslie Jackson Judge '91 P'24 '26, Laura Hahn P'27 '30 '33, and Aqueela Culbreath-Britt P'24 celebrate at the spring leadership giving reception

Throughout the year, the CRS community experienced many joyful moments together.



Fair Co-Chairs Rory Glaeseman P'28 '33 and Cindy Fung P'26 '30 take in the CRS Fair with Community Association Chair Ruthie Straus P'30 '32



Leslie Jackson Judge '91 P'24 '26, Heather Willis P'23 '30, and Taylor Stokes-Roller and Chris Roller P'30 cheer on the relays at Sports Day

Key Dates in the Admissions Process

Admissions season is underway, and we're excited to welcome prospective students and their families to Charles River School! The application deadline is January 15, and campus tours and admissions events begin each year in mid-September. For questions or to learn more, please contact Director of Enrollment Management & Financial Aid Sarah Wooten at swooten@charlesriverschool.org or 508-785-8213.

Individual Tours

Weekdays throughout the fall and winter

Open Houses

October 23 Grades PreK-8

November 12 Grades 5-8

Deadlines

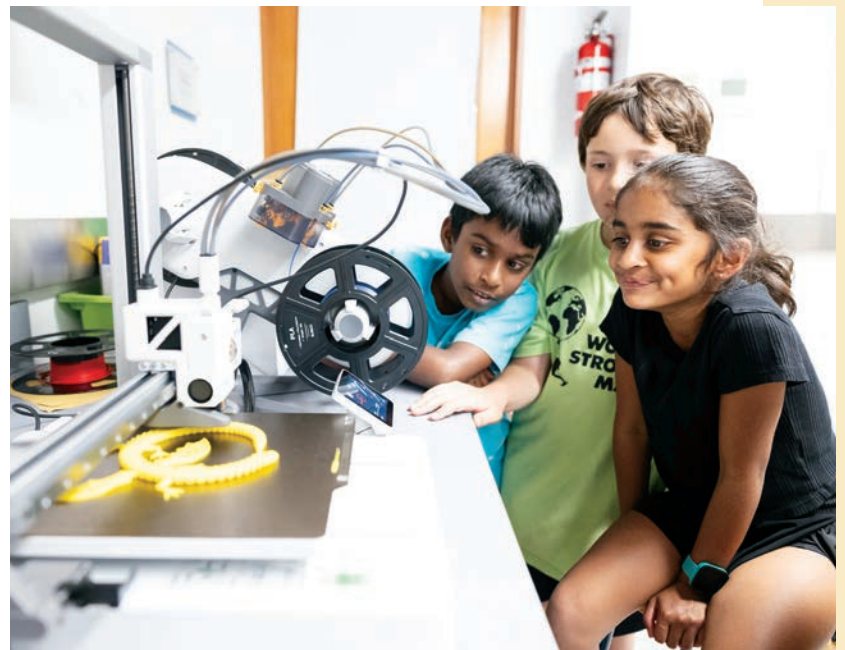
Application Deadline: January 15, 2027

Financial Aid Deadline: February 1, 2027

Notifications

Decisions are shared by March 10, 2027

Contracts are due April 10, 2027



Mason and Lisa Fitch P'32 and Rosa Ateku P'32 (center) under the pavilion at the Welcome Back party



Megan Repoff P'28, Oriana Montani P'30 '32 '35, Sara Ginsberg P'25 '28, and Kate Paglia P'27 '30, joined by student helper Henry Montani '35, volunteer at the CRS Fair



Dan and Hayley Stokes P'23 '25 '28 enjoy the the yacht rock-themed Spring Fling with Amy and Sean Walsh P'28 '31



Kate Mason '89 and Chris Hummel P'30 delight in Spring Fling

New Faculty & Staff



Katie Catalano
FIRST GRADE CO-TEACHER

Katie joins Charles River School from the Wellesley Public Schools, where she spent many years teaching kindergarten. She is excited for the opportunity to work with first graders. As an educator, Katie finds great joy and purpose in helping students explore big ideas across subjects while allowing their curiosity to guide discovery. She values imagination, connection, and deep exploration and looks forward to bringing those qualities to her partnership with her co-teacher and the first-grade team.



Sarah Diamond
FIRST GRADE CO-TEACHER

Sarah served as a substitute teacher for CRS in the 2025-2026 school year. She joins our community from Dexter-Southfield, where she was a coach and teacher for various grades for 13 years. In her classroom, Sarah creates hands-on learning experiences, helps students find literature that fosters curiosity and reflection, and encourages connections among the community and to the real world. Sarah is looking forward to collaborating with the first-grade team, sharing ideas, and implementing strategies that reach and support every student.



Kristen Fredericksen
KINDERGARTEN CO-TEACHER

Kristen joins our community from Fay School, where she has been a dorm parent and assistant kindergarten teacher for the last four years. She also served as a paraprofessional in the Brockton Public Schools. Kristen's practice as an early childhood educator is firmly rooted in the belief that play, meaningful relationships, and thoughtful documentation are paramount to a child's development. Kristen's teaching philosophy centers on creating nurturing and developmentally appropriate environments where every child feels secure, capable, and motivated to learn and explore. She is looking forward to bringing her dedication and creativity to the kindergarten team.



Joslyn Hanson
PREK & K ART TEACHER

Joslyn is an experienced early childhood educator who joins CRS from Little Things Academy. Through her time as a preschool teacher, she incorporated art and sensory play to encourage students to be creative, explore, and develop their fine motor skills. She worked this summer as the art teacher for the CRS Summer Creative Starts camp. Joslyn is looking forward to creating an environment where children feel known and valued while building independence, collaboration, and a love for art.

New Trustees

Board of Trustees

President
Kate Paglia

Vice President
Rebecca Grimm

Treasurer
James McElligott

Clerk
Dan Stokes

New Trustees

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

Thank you to the Trustees who have completed their terms:

Nancy Galindo-Rodriguez P'23 '28
Beth Newmark P'24 '27



Dan Foran P'33 '36

Dan currently serves on the Finance Committee of the CRS Board of Trustees. He is the Head of Product at RISE Robotics. In this role, he leads product strategy, engages closely with customers, and supports engineering teams in bringing complex, software-enabled hardware systems from concept to market. Prior to RISE, Dan was Head of Product at Zitara, a battery management software startup, and earlier in his career worked as a design engineer at Google Nest and iRobot developing consumer products. Dan earned a B.S. in Mechanical Engineering from Olin College and an MBA from the Tuck School of Business at Dartmouth. Dan lives in Wellesley with his wife, Kate, and their three children: Charlie '33, Eamon '36, and Miles, age two. He enjoys skiing, hiking, mountain biking, and fiddling with analog cars.



Sachin Shah P'31 '33

Sachin currently serves on the Finance Committee of the CRS Board of Trustees. He has spent his career working in financial technology, helping organizations grow and adapt in a rapidly changing world. He currently leads Mantri Advisory, where he advises companies on product development, sales strategy, mergers and acquisitions, and general management. In addition to his committee work at CRS, Sachin serves on the Board of Directors of FitMoney, a nonprofit organization dedicated to improving financial literacy for students in grades K–12. Sachin holds a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration from George Washington University. He lives in Needham with his wife, Sabiha, and their two children, Laila '31 and Zaiden '33. Outside of work, Sachin enjoys gathering with friends and family, exploring new entrepreneurial ideas, making pizza, and skiing in New Hampshire.



Christiana Stevenson P'28 '33 '36

Christiana currently serves on the Audit and Risk Committee of the CRS Board of Trustees. She is Assistant General Counsel at Vertex Pharmaceuticals, responsible for corporate governance and disclosures. Prior to Vertex, Christiana spent a decade in private practice, Hogan Lovells in New York and Ropes & Gray in Boston, advising public companies and their boards on M&A, capital markets transactions, and all governance matters. Christiana graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a B.A. in International Relations and—after a two-year stint living the dream in New York—returned to Penn for her J.D. Christiana and her husband, Rory, live in Dover with their three children Eloise '28, Otto '33, and Oskar '36. When not working, Christiana likes to plan her family's next adventure and spend time at the beach.

New Faculty & Staff



Nihal Dayal Kodavarti
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
OF ADMISSIONS AND
ADVANCEMENT

Nihal brings a unique perspective shaped by his experiences as an educator, advisor, and enrollment professional. He joins CRS from Beacon Academy, where he most recently served as Enrollment & Placement Coordinator, guiding students and families through the high school application process and partnering with more than 50 independent schools across New England. Before moving into admissions, Nihal taught middle school mathematics at both Beacon Academy and Providence Day School in Charlotte, North Carolina. In addition to teaching, he coordinated experiential learning programs, advised students, and helped lead initiatives that fostered belonging and student engagement. Nihal earned a B.A. in Mathematics and Economics from Oberlin College and a Master of Education in Education Policy and Analysis from the Harvard Graduate School of Education.



Jess Penney
SECOND GRADE CO-TEACHER

Jess joins CRS from Haynes Elementary School in Sudbury where she served as both a third and fourth-grade teacher. Jess prides herself on helping students build independence, deepen academic thinking, and strengthen their social skills. She believes that students learn best when they feel safe, understood, and supported, and that effective classroom management begins with helping children regulate their emotions so they are ready to learn. Jess is looking forward to joining the second-grade team, where she will help students grapple with complex ideas and rise to meaningful challenges by providing appropriate scaffolding, encouragement, and the confidence to learn from mistakes.



Huma Shahid
GRADE 7 & GRADE 8
MATH TEACHER

Huma joins the CRS community from the Academy of the Sacred Heart in New Orleans, LA where she served as a math instructor and grade 8 advisor. She has experience teaching grades 3-8 and accelerated algebra, and she was the Math Coordinator at Lahore Grammar School for a decade before coming to the United States. Huma strives to teach math in a way that makes the subject approachable and connected to the world. With her years of experience working with students who need targeted intervention as well as those who need extension, Huma is looking forward to collaborating with the middle school math team to create an intentional program that prepares students for high school and beyond.



Jeffrey Toussaint
GRADE 6 MATH & SCIENCE
TEACHER

Jeff served as a coach, grade 6 teacher, and former Dean of Students for 30 years at Thayer Academy. In the classroom and out on the field, Jeff is known for his passion, knowledge, empathy, and the ability to connect with students, coaches, and colleagues. Jeff is a quintessential team player who works unselfishly with others toward common goals. As a lifelong learner, Jeff is looking forward to this new opportunity to work with the grade 6 team to teach math and science, while helping students transition to middle school in a safe classroom environment that encourages them to take risks.



Shana Waltz
PREK-2 SPANISH TEACHER

Shana is an experienced early childhood educator who joins us from Armstrong Preschool in Cincinnati, OH. Shana is looking forward to introducing young learners to Spanish in a way that feels joyful, engaging, and developmentally appropriate. Shana is excited to contribute to the CRS mission by creating a Spanish classroom where students in PreK through grade 2 learn through songs, stories, games, movement, and cultural exploration, building both language skills and a genuine enthusiasm for learning about other cultures.



Kat Whitten
19 YEARS

Thank you to **Kat Whitten, Director of Community Engagement**, for 19 years of service. Kat first joined CRS in 2007 and held the roles of Assistant Director of Development and Director of Admissions before serving in her final role, Director of Community Engagement. Kat is the proud parent of two CRS graduates, Emily '14 and Nate '16.

Kat is a bright spot, friend, and resource to all, including the vast Charles River School community of alumni, former colleagues, and past parents. She is always 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. We are incredibly thankful for her contributions to our school over the last two decades.

Kat shared, "I am so grateful for the 19 years I have spent at CRS! During my time here, I've had the opportunity to work in multiple roles, grow in my leadership, and build meaningful professional and personal relationships with students, families, alumni, and colleagues. I will miss being here daily, but I know that my kids and I will remain part of the CRS community."



Jordy Hertzberg
16 YEARS

Thank you to **Jordy Hertzberg, Grades 1 and 2 Co-Teacher**, for 16 years of service. Jordy has been a deeply valued member of our community from the moment he first set foot on campus in 2010. During his time at CRS, Jordy has taught first, second, and fourth grade. He has served as a coach and a teammate, participating wholeheartedly in many end-of-season faculty vs student games (often found reconnecting with visiting alumni on the sidelines).

He is known for relentlessly advocating for his students, both during their time in his care and long after, for raising his hand to help join various committees to better the future of our school, and for his work as a remarkable educator. Whether he is encouraging student scientists to lead with curiosity as they conduct an experiment, working with his language arts group to explore words and uncover the power of language, or executing an impactful project planned with the One/Two team, Jordy's classroom is a source of constant creativity, joy, and academic excellence.

Jordy shared, "I deeply cherish our school and all of the connections that I've made over the years. CRS is a very special place and I'll miss returning in the fall."

Faculty Farewells

With heartfelt thanks for your decades of service!



[Alumni News]

CRS Young Alumni Award Winner Affy Kazmirski '22

"Don't wait for somebody else to come along and do it. Think, 'if I don't, who will?' Be that person who takes action because there are so many people who cannot wait for the next person to come along. You have the ability to make change—in high school, in middle school, even in elementary school. All you have to do is make the decision to be committed."

—Affy Kazmirski '22, sharing what motivates her community service work

CONGRATULATIONS TO AFFY KAZMIRSKI '22, recipient of the 2026 Charles River School Young Alumni Award! Affy was honored at CRS's Final Assembly on June 10. [1]

Affy joined the CRS community in grade 5, where she quickly stood out for her artistic talent, love of reading, intellectual curiosity, and quiet leadership. Since graduating from CRS, she has excelled at Dover-Sherborn High School, challenging herself with a rigorous academic program while pursuing her passions beyond the classroom.

A gifted visual artist, Affy has received many accolades for her work. She has been published in *Runes*, the esteemed literary magazine for Dover-Sherborn students. She was the winner of the 2026 Kymera Greeting Cards Contest and a 2025 finalist for the Naomi Rabb Winston Scholarship.

Affy has helped to lead TEDx Youth talks at Dover-Sherborn High School, and is a member of the National Honor Society, World Language Honor Society (having begun her exploration of French at CRS with Madame Julie Weeden), and the Chemical Society Olympiad.

Dedicated to service, Affy has volunteered with organizations supporting seniors, unhoused individuals, and families facing food insecurity. In 2025, she founded A Book for Everyone, a nonprofit that provides new books to children in underserved communities, inspired by her commitment to improving early literacy.

This fall, Affy will attend Davidson College in North Carolina.



1941

CRS was delighted to hear from **BASIL GAVIN '41**, who wrote to Head of School Gabe Burnstein this fall. Basil currently lives in northern California and shared fond memories of his time at CRS. At his request, we were able to share photos of his classmates and teachers with him by mail.

1942

PAMELA RICHMOND ORR '42, currently residing in Ohio, recently reached out and shared, "CRS was my absolute favorite learning 'home!' I've never forgotten those years." Pam connected with CRS to see about getting in touch with former classmates. We are happy to help connect alumni! Reach out to us at alumni@charlesriversschool.org.

1960

NORTH LYMAN CUNNINGHAM '60 was on campus in May, during which time she connected with current members of the CRS community and with former Director of Development Linda Fenton P'90, who also dropped in for a visit.

1965

[2] REED AUSTIN '65 P'04 '05 and wife Nancy stopped by CRS this spring to visit and reminisce about his time as a student and parent of two graduates. Reed lives in Westport, MA.

1979

[3] GEORGE HUNNEWELL '79 P'11 '12 and family were in Brittany, France, last summer for the wedding of George's son **NICHOLAS HUNNEWELL '11**. Nick is a senior Analyst at Tesla in the Bay Area. Attending the wedding were many family and friends, including multiple generations of CRS graduates. Pictured are some of the CRS attendees: George (father of the groom), **DAKOTA FENN '11**, and **NOEMI LI '27**.

1984

[4] JESSICA THOMPSON SOMOL '84 P'17 '19 and husband Mark Somol P'17 '19 ran into **RYAN BODIO '13** and **BELLA BODIO '17** on the Cape this summer. Bella, who graduated from Providence College in 2025, is a Project Manager at The Pheasant on the Cape and is also volunteering as a child life specialist at Umass Memorial Medical Center. Ryan is also based in Massachusetts, working as a Manufacturing Engineer at Lockheed Martin.

1986

ANNA HOFFMAN '86 shares that she recently founded The Purpose Network, a digital platform that connects individuals with communities of practice—those who share a common interest or passion—with the goal of mentorship, professional growth, and change. Anna is excited "to build community, build knowledge, and build change by bringing



professionals together with nonprofits and mission-driven organizations. The Purpose Network meets this moment of incredible change, for good." Anna lives in Oakland, California, and invites all members of the CRS community to check out The Purpose Network online.

1990

AZURAE CHAMBERS HOOD '90 is currently working as the Director of Marketing and Enrollment at Wellen Montessori School in Newton, MA. Azurae serves on the CRS Alumni Council and was recently on campus. She shared great insights from her perspective as an independent school administrator and parent, and also reminisced fondly about her time at CRS, including carpooling to school with Desi Doulos-Ayers P'83 '93, former Administrative Coordinator and Executive Assistant to the Head of School.

1994

DEB WILLIS DOWLING '94 helped CRS host a gathering of NYC-area alumni in November. Head of School Gabe Burnstein traveled to the city to visit with alums and to help chaperone the 7th grade field trip. We were joined by **EMILY LISBON PETERSON '98**, **JANNA BURKE SPOCK '98**, **GREG KANTROWITZ '00**, **DAVID MASTERMAN '04**, and **MELANIE CHEN '17**.



5



7

2013

[5] GENNY COHEN '13 married Jeffrey Bush in Groton, MA in July 2025. Several CRS alumni were in attendance, including Genny's classmates, pictured with the bride: **ISABELLE BASTIAN**, **EMILY CHEN**, and **MADI VESPA**.

[6] This summer's World Cup matches were a hit with members of the CRS community, including the Gomes family. **KYLE**



6



8

GOMES '13, **DYLAN GOMES '16**, and **NATHAN GOMES '21**, along with their parents Olga and Joao, were lucky enough to attend a game and cheer on the team from Cape Verde.

2014

[7/8] It was a big year for the Davidson/ Evantash family as **SARAH EVANTASH '14** and **NOAH EVANTASH '16** both got married in the span of a few months. Congratulations to Sarah and her wife Atessa, who married last September. Sarah received her Masters in Landscape Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania in 2024 and now works as a landscape designer at a firm in the Philadelphia area. Noah and his wife, Charlotte, tied the knot in Cambridge, MA in June, 2026.



9

2015

[9] **KATHERINE JACKSON '15** and Andrew Fiore were married in April, 2026 in a beautiful ceremony in Wellesley. Among those celebrating the happy couple were family members **SUSAN JACKSON '75 P'15** (mother of the bride), **Phyllis Jackson P'74 '75 GP '15 '19**, **Karl Jackson P'19**, **ALISON CAMPBELL '83 P'19**, and **BEN JACKSON '19**. The wedding served as a mini reunion for members of the Class of 2015, including **JORDYN KERR**, **LILY BROWN**, **MALIK GOMES-CRUZ**, and **SOPHIE RIDLON**.



2016

[10] DAVIS HOWLAND '16 graduated from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in the spring and is currently planning a move to Boulder, Colorado. Davis has worked as a mechanical engineer and continues to be a competitive rock climber.

2017

PHILLIP SPYROU '17 completed his first year of a PhD program in structural biology at Stanford University. He graduated in May of 2025 from Bowdoin College with a double major in visual arts and chemistry. Phillip continues to create art, focusing on sculptures and functional vessels.

2018

[11] TORI EYSIE '18 graduated in May from Boston College with a degree in International Relations and Marketing. The week before her college graduation, Tori spent a day at CRS, where she was an end-to-ender, to revisit her educational roots before completing her formal education (for now, at least). Many faculty, including Julie Weeden and Billy Beazile enjoyed catching up with her. Tori is now working in Global Brand Marketing at SharkNinja in Needham.



[12] JULIAN HOWLAND '18 received his BA in graphic design from Rochester Institute of Technology in the spring. He has been working as a freelance graphic designer and website designer throughout college.

focus on glaciers, at the University of Wisconsin-Madison beginning this fall. Pictured: Kurt P'18, Carson '18, and Mica P'18, Director of Performing and Visual Arts.

[13] CARSON MOELLERING '18 graduated in May from Bates College, where he was a captain of the track and field team, ran cross country, and participated in the Bates musician union. A physics major, Carson will be pursuing a PhD in the geoscience department, with a





2019

[14] JULIUS HOCHBERG '19 is a rising senior at Brown University, studying physics and engineering. He visited campus this spring, participating in a meeting of the Development Committee and catching up with faculty members, including Jordy Herztberg and Chris Raskin.

2021

ALEX LEAHY '21 completed his freshman year at Tufts University where he is the operations manager for Tuft's Camp Kesem chapter, which provides free summer camp and year-round support for children impacted by a parent's cancer in the Medford and Greater Boston community. Alex spends a great deal of time working with young people, through his involvement with Brave Arts and Open Fields, two performing arts organizations, and as a sought-after counselor at summer camps for which he has worked. Alex has also emerged as an outstanding Ninja Warrior coach, channeling his love for the sport into teaching and mentoring young ninjas.

2022

LARA DO ROSARIO '22 graduated from Winsor School and is heading to Georgetown University in the fall to study at the Walsh School of Foreign Service. Lara shares, "The Model UN program at CRS instilled in me an interest in current events, and support from the MUN advisors Chris Raskin and Tessa Steinert Evoy really helped build my confidence debating, negotiating, and researching."

2024

JULIAN PASSANANTI '24, a rising junior at Holderness School, spent part of last summer in Poland as a volunteer counselor at a trauma camp for Ukrainian children ages 5-13, all of whom had lost at least one soldier-parent to the war. This travel experience was made possible by the New Hampshire non-profit Common Man for Ukraine, a cause for which Julian and his fellow volunteers have become passionate fundraisers. Julian has spoken publicly about the cause at the Rotary Club and to his fellow students, encouraging awareness and helping to ensure that other Ukrainian children can benefit from the camp.



[15] LIAM KERR '24 is a rising junior at Proctor Academy in New Hampshire, where he plays cornerback and wide receiver on the varsity football team. Last season, Liam's former coach, Zack Swale, former Director of Facilities at CRS, made it to a game to cheer Liam on.

ARI ITZKOVITS '24 was on campus this winter to shadow Gabe Burnstein to learn about the role of Head of School and Gabe's personal and professional path as part of an academic project for a class at Belmont Hill School. Written in the style of a magazine article, the final product was 22 pages long and a copy of it has been placed in the school's archives.

KEEP US IN THE LOOP!

Have you changed your mailing or email address? Email us at alumni@charlesriverschool.org to update your contact information so we can keep you informed about CRS news and events.

Welcome to CHARLES RIVER SCHOOL



This spring members of the Alumni Council **EMILY WHITTEN '14**, **JORDYN KERR '15**, **SARA REMSEN '04**, **DOUG SURGENOR '02**, and **AZURAE CHAMBERS HOOD '90** visited Old Meadow Road. Alumni spent time reconnecting with faculty and students, visiting classrooms, and sharing thoughtful perspectives on moving our *Forward Together* strategic plan ahead.

A Passion for Politics

KIDDER BRADY'S INTEREST IN POLITICS and government structures goes deep. A member of the CRS Class of 2023, Kidder kicked off her summer, just days after finishing final exams at Rivers School, by heading to Georgetown University for a week-long American Politics Academy. The intensive program mixed lectures led by Georgetown professors with meeting people working on the Hill with opportunities to debate topics and create bipartisan solutions to real-world problems. It was a deep dive into the three branches of American government, and Kidder grappled with topics including ways to make primary elections more fair and concerns about gerrymandering.

This knowledge may be more practical than academic one day, as Kidder is considering a future in politics. A near future, in fact. She plans to run for a seat as a Wellesley Town Meeting member in the spring of 2027. How does someone who isn't old enough to vote get interested in local government? Through student government, of course.

After serving as a moderator in the CRS middle school student government, Kidder won a seat on the Rivers student council during her freshman and sophomore years. While she appreciated the opportunity to have a voice in her new school, she also desired more. "I wanted a way to be more impactful and getting involved with local government seemed like a way to get real-life experience," Kidder reflects.

This past March, Kidder put her name forward to serve as a Town Meeting member, and though she fell just a few votes shy of winning, she says she learned a lot from the experience. "The process was incredible," Kidder says, emphasizing that she gained



a lot of insights from talking with neighbors, hand-delivering postcards, and putting up yard signs. "The human connection makes a big difference."

This coming spring, Kidder plans to start her campaign earlier to be sure that people who vote early via mail-in ballots will know that she's running. She will also continue to make connections within her town and she looks forward to learning more about the issues that face local governments. In the meantime, Kidder plans to volunteer on a gubernatorial campaign this fall and will serve on the Rivers Disciplinary Committee.

IN MEMORIAM

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

LIZ ALEXANDER '72 died at home with her family by her side after a brief illness on March 24, 2026. After graduating from CRS, Liz went to Dover-Sherborn High School before receiving a BFA from Boston University. Professionally, Liz enjoyed a long career, first at Navtec, a sailboat rigging company based in Groton, MA, and then as purchasing manager at NetScout Systems, where she worked for nearly 20 years. Liz started riding horseback almost as soon as she could walk and became an accomplished equestrian. She had many travel adventures with her sister **Nancy '69**, doing coast-to-coast hikes in England, riding bikes from Prague to Budapest, and scaling the “Peaks of Europe” in Spain. She was predeceased by her sister **Janet '67** and will be greatly missed by her family, friends, and partner, Charles DeAmbrose.

WALTER CABOT '45, father of **Walter Jr. '69**, **Linda '70**, **David '74**, and **James '79**, passed away peacefully on June 2, 2026, at the age of 93. A distinguished investment executive, trusted advisor, and civic leader, Walter lived a life marked by deep commitment to family, education, and public service. He served on the CRS Board of Trustees as well as those of many other schools and organizations. Walter is perhaps best known for founding and leading the Harvard Management Company, the investment organization responsible for managing Harvard University's endowment. His work at Harvard pioneered the way many universities and nonprofit institutions manage their investment assets today. Above all else, Walter's greatest love was his wife, Dorothy “Dorsey” Scullin Cabot. They married in 1955, beginning a partnership that would span more than seventy years. Their enduring devotion to one another was an inspiring example of love, loyalty, and companionship.

GLENN CARROLL, father of **Casey Rothschild '09**, **Sam Rothschild '16**, and **Jake Rothschild '16**, and husband of Emily Rothschild, passed away suddenly on October 15, 2025. A veteran of the Vietnam War, Glenn is remembered for his willingness to give a helping hand to anyone in need. His amazing woodworking skills were admired by everyone, especially those who bid on his beautiful donations to the CRS auctions.

ERIN CUMMINGS, mother of **Lizzie '01**, **Ted '04**, **Claire '06**, and **Martin '14**, died peacefully on February 24, 2026, surrounded by her family, including her beloved husband, Rich. Erin was an active volunteer at CRS and is remembered for her warmth and compassion. After her children were grown, Erin turned her experience as a cancer survivor into advocacy. In 2016, Erin founded Hodgkin's International—organizing, fundraising, educating, and building a global community that now provides support and guidance to thousands of survivors worldwide.

JENNY KENNEDY, mother of **Quinn '24** and **Devin '26**, died on May 31, 2026, at the age of 46. Jenny was an active member of a tight-knit community in Medfield, MA, where she was a yoga instructor and volunteer for the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation. Jenny's compassion, creative spirit, and twinkling smile put others at ease and brought joy and connection to so many who had the privilege of crossing her path, including those in the CRS community. Jenny is survived by her two daughters and her husband, Liam.

FRANK KONESKY, father of **Georgie Konesky MacDonald '99**, passed away surrounded by family on February 3, 2026. An award-winning photojournalist and television producer, Frank imparted his love of hiking and biking to Georgie and they often reminisced about an incredible week in the Southwest where they hiked the Grand Canyon and Angel's Landing. They also spent many afternoons catching painted turtles from kayaks on the Charles River and he was a devoted grandfather to Georgie's children.

DAVID LEE '46 died peacefully on February 25, 2026, with family by his side. A graduate of CRS, Milton Academy, and Harvard University, David served as a reserve officer in the U.S. Navy and enjoyed a long career in investment counseling. Together, David and his wife Lucinda enjoyed the arts, travel, and raising their children in Brookline, MA. David possessed a thirst for knowledge and effortlessly built relationships with his scholarly and social intelligence. However, it was his booming laugh and unwavering devotion to friends and family that made his Rolodex overflow. David was predeceased by his wife, Lucinda, and his siblings **George '41** and **Madeline Lee Gregory '43**. He leaves behind many loving family members, including his three children—Alexander, Madeline, and Alice—and sister **Kathleen Lee Sherbrooke '49**.

FRANK SOLA, father of **Stephanie Sola George '86** and **Catherine Sola-Hyun '92**, passed away peacefully surrounded by his family on January 16, 2026. A native of Connecticut, Frank built a long career in the software industry, including founding his own consulting firms. Frank served as the Chair of the CRS Board of Trustees and was also active on the boards of Rivers School and the Dover Church. Frank was known for his larger-than-life personality, kind nature, and warm presence.

ROBERT STANTON, father of **David '06**, passed away on June 5, 2026. He was a loving husband, father, and grandfather. Robert served as Investigator and Staff Physician Chief of the Kidney and Hypertension Section at the Joslin Diabetes Center, and was an Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School. He is remembered as a caring physician, pioneering researcher, and devoted mentor to generations of scientists.

JOHN THOMPSON, father of **Rupert Thompson '78**, **Juliet Thompson Hochman '81**, and former CRS Director of Development **Jessica Thompson Somol '84**, died on March 30 after a long illness, surrounded by members of his family. John served as the President of the CRS Board of Trustees and was a much-heralded auctioneer at the school's annual auctions in the 1970s and 1980s. Born and educated in England, John came to the US in 1963 and enjoyed a successful career in computer technology. He was also dedicated to building community and conservation, serving on many boards and cofounding, with his wife of 63 years, Carol, MasiCorp, a nonprofit foundation serving 60,000 residents in Cape Town, South Africa. John's friendship, encouragement, and mentorship deeply impacted the lives of many, including his grandchildren **Nate Hochman '13**, **Thomas Hochman '15**, **Charlotte Somol '17**, and **Emma Somol '19**.