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August 21, 2014

Dear students, parents, and guardians,

There is a wonderful buzz around the school right now. We have changed the names of our buildings as part of a larger reorganization from Lower and Upper Schools to Middle and High Schools. Some room numbers and phone extensions have changed. The fresh paint is drying. And faculty and staff are eagerly anticipating the arrival of students on August 27th. Teachers are busy learning from each other, planning lessons, and thinking about the students each will have this year. Assorted alumni are here, working on different projects before they leave for college. Everyone is so excited about what's ahead. We do this work because our students, your children, inspire us on a daily basis. And we simply love seeing them grow, improve, and excel. I hope you share a similar excitement for all of the promise that the 2014-15 school year holds.

This past July, Mr. Dineen, our associate principal, led CCSC's Summer Academy, which for the first time included new students entering grade 6. As has been the case historically, these four weeks prove invaluable for new students, helping them adjust to what it means to be a scholar at CCSC. Some of our students also completed summer course work at the Cambridge Harvard Summer Academy.

With one week to go, all students should be well into their summer reading and writing assignments. Most have finished them already. (Information is on the website.) Humanities teachers will teach lessons on Day 1 that rely on this reading having been completed. Books were carefully chosen to ensure accessibility. Ms. Henry, our literacy coordinator, just finished leading a session for our entire faculty on the importance of reading, our approach to improving skills, and our successes to date in catching students up and catapulting them ahead. Please, please reinforce these messages at home. Nothing is more critical and nothing will better help students prepare for post-secondary success in the years to come.

CCSC is entering its tenth year of operation. For some of us, it seems like yesterday that we opened our doors to students for the first time. Charter schools in Massachusetts are granted license to operate for five years at a time. Our school community will go through the renewal process this fall. It is quite thorough and the stakes are high. A visiting team will observe classes, pore over program documentation, and hold various focus groups, including one for parents and guardians. If you are interested in participating, schedule permitting, please contact Ms. Norris, our middle school principal.

Please take some time to review the important information below:

- **Our first day of school is August 27th.** 1:30PM dismissal, as is typical on Wednesdays throughout the school year. We will hold school on August 28th. The Cambridge school bus will *not* be running the first two days, unfortunately.



We will *not* have school on Friday, August 29th or Monday, September 1st, which is Labor Day. The bus schedule is posted online and service begins on September 2nd.

- **School supplies:** The list is featured prominently on our website. Take advantage of those back-to-school sales and make sure your child shows up on August 27th with everything he or she needs to be successful.
- **There have been some significant changes to the Code of Conduct.** There are more differences between the rules for younger students and the ones for older students than ever before. As always, the handbook is available online. We will distribute bound copies on August 27th, which include various forms that must be completed promptly and returned. Spanish and Haitian Creole versions of the entire Student & Family Handbook are available as well.
- **We will have lunch for students on August 27th and 28th who do not bring one and breakfast for students who have not eaten at home.** September menu/order forms will be posted on our website and must be turned in for meals to be ordered for your child.
- **Enclosed with this letter is our Family Directory Opt-Out form.** If you do not want your information published and distributed to other CCSC families, please let us know by completing and returning the form.
- **Back to School Night will be on September 23rd this year.** Please hold the evening and plan to join us.
- **Discounted monthly T-Passes (student Charlie Cards) can be purchased at school from Ms. Smith.** These cards are renewable each month at a cost of \$26. The cards work on all buses and trains except the commuter rail (purple line) every day of the week, including weekends. Cards must be renewed before the end of each month.
- **Like us on Facebook!** If you're new to our community, or haven't found us online yet, please take a moment to do so. In addition to various stories and photos about the happenings around school, we use Facebook to announce school closings (we also use TV news stations) and other news.

That's it! A lot of information, I know. But all of it is important and I want to sincerely thank you for doing what it takes to get, and stay, informed. We are immensely proud of the work we do and so very honored to have you actively choose us. We strive, and will continue to strive, to provide the highest quality education possible to your child because, simply put, each and every student in our care deserves it. Doing so takes your help and support. Please do not hesitate to communicate with us as is necessary.

Sincerely,
 Caleb Hurst-Hiller
 Head of School

If your child will not be attending CCSC in 2014-15, please phone Monica Tecca (ext. 202) as soon as possible (before the 27th), so that we can plan accordingly.

C O M M U N I T Y



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