



October 1, 2013

Dear CCSC Students, Parents, and Guardians,

It's hard to believe that we're already through the first full month of the school year, but as you well know, once the momentum builds, it's almost impossible to stop. As the leaves around here start to turn, our school community enters the most productive stretch of time. Interruptions are rare and a rhythm is established. Authentic learning takes place. Skills are honed. Real gains are made during this string of weeks leading up to the Thanksgiving break. As your child starts to get into a comfortable and productive rhythm, or maintains the one he or she has already established, think about the different supports we offer here at school and all of the ways you can most effectively support our work at home.

I hope that you have by now heard the news about our **2013 MCAS results**. CCSC ranked #1 in the state for 10th grade ELA. Our 10th grade math scores were also strong, with 90% of our students scoring advanced or proficient! CCSC students continue to perform admirably on the science exams – our 8th grade scores have continued to improve and every single one of our high school students passed their exam. Lastly, our middle school math and ELA scores were stronger than ever. Student growth, as measured by the state, was very strong for every single one of the exams referenced above. And if you've heard us talk about MCAS, you know that we care deeply about the gains students are making, which will ultimately prepare each and every one for post-secondary success.

Enclosed with this letter is your child's **Quarter 1 progress report**. We're about an eighth of the way through the school year and have reached an initial and official checkpoint. As you are hopefully well aware, your child's advisor will be reaching out to you by telephone if your child is "in danger of failing" any of his or her courses with a grade of 72 or below. Students have had time to adjust to teachers and vice versa. Lots of work has been assessed: homework assignments, quizzes, in-class assignments, tests, projects, and essays. An accurate picture of your child's progress is now possible. So, please pay close attention to this report. Ask your child lots of questions and listen to his or her explanations. If you don't receive a phone call, but do want to discuss your child's grades, either come to Back to School Night or give your child's advisor a call.

Last Thursday, we held a drill practicing our Code Red protocol. We would use this protocol in the event that students needed to shelter in place during an emergency. It's important that families know that we are taking emergency preparedness seriously. It's equally important that you know that our school environment is safe and supportive. We pride ourselves on how strong the relationships are that we build here.



Here are some announcements. Please do take the time to read through each and reach out if you have any questions:

- **Back to School Night is on Tuesday, October 8th.** I hope to see many new and returning parents and guardians at this important event. Meet the parents and guardians of other CCSC students, put faces to names, chat with your child's advisor, and check in briefly with your child's teachers. Join us at 6 PM for coffee and snacks. The program runs from 6:30 to 8:00 PM. In addition, you can receive support accessing and navigating PowerSchool so you can stay current with your child's assignments and grades, and get more information on our extracurricular activities, the Parent Guardian Association's work, transportation to and from school, the lunch program, and the School Nurse's office.
- **Student MCAS Test results:** If your child took the MCAS last year at CCSC, his/her results are included with this mailing. Take a moment to review them and talk about the results with your child. What makes you proud? Which areas require improvement? CCSC's curriculum is working: we're closing the achievement gap, catching students up, and helping them race ahead. Is your child taking full advantage of our academic offerings?
- **Community Meetings:** Last Friday, during the middle of the day, we had our first of four school-wide community meetings. We gathered in large groups, shared shout-outs and gave thanks, and engaged in various activities intended to build spirit and strengthen the bonds that form our community.
- **New Policy for Juniors and Seniors:** Students in the 11th and 12th grade who have a GPA below 2.5 at the close of any marking period will be required to attend an After School Learning Center every Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday through the duration of subsequent marking period. This change has been made to support students and prepare them for life at a post-secondary institution and beyond. If you have questions, please contact Upper School Principal Chris Cook.
- **Conduct on the T:** We have gotten some reports from the MBTA that a few of our students are not behaving properly on the train, especially on the way home. Ms. Norris and Mr. Cook will be in touch with specific parents about this issue. We care deeply about the safety of all CCSC students. Aggressive behavior or unwarranted rudeness will not be tolerated. We are proud to sit in this Kendall Square community and expect that all of our students act as ambassadors for the school at all times.

Thank you, as always, for reading. If you have questions, do not hesitate to reach out. We are committed to partnering with you to ensure that every CCSC student has a positive and successful school experience.

Caleb Hurst-Hiller
 Head of School