



December 10, 2012

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Dear CCSC Students, Parents, and Guardians,

I last wrote with Thanksgiving approaching. It's hard to believe that I'm now writing with the winter holiday vacation right around the corner. So much has happened since I last wrote and the process of selecting what to share in these brief letters is always challenging.

Our Pep Rally was a real success. Students lead the way, performing skillfully. The spirit of the event was inspiring and the energy in the MIT gym was wonderful, with students cheering on their peers, watching, shouting, laughing. With ten minutes remaining, I got to address the entire student body, which does not happen enough. I conveyed to them what I was feeling thankful for – our community partners, new students who had made it through the long stretch to the break, our juniors for the MCAS success, our seniors for their leadership, CCSC's staff for the work each does behind the scenes to make the school run and, of course, CCSC's teachers, who work so hard to ensure that our students receive a quality of education that is comparable to any school in the country.

As I hope you know and appreciate, we take safety at CCSC very seriously. You have entrusted us with your children and we must do everything within our power to ensure they feel secure while at school. And make no mistake, CCSC is a *very* safe school. We are also concerned with their travel to and from school. Some aspects of the commute seem within our control and others do not. Student behavior directly outside of the school building is something we can monitor and will be stepping up in the coming months. Playing in the street with cars whizzing by is not only silly and immature, it's dangerous. We will monitor this and we will come down hard on students who take such unnecessary risks. We hope you will support our effort in doing this and recognize its purpose – to keep students safe.

In other news, **the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted in October to approve a minor amendment CCSC submitted, requesting that we be able to expand and start serving students in 6th grade.** The start date for our beginning to enroll students in 6th grade has not yet been determined, but we think it will be Fall 2014 (not next year, but the one after).

Please review the following important announcements:

The Community Charter School of Cambridge will prepare a diverse student body, grades 7–12, for postsecondary education, work, and citizenship. At CCSC, all students are known well, encouraged to meet high expectations, and linked to their community through internships and other field experiences.



- **Homework over vacation:** Every student will have a considerable amount of work during the break. While this vacation is a long one, it's critical that students return ready to pick up where they left off. Keeping the momentum will allow students to be successful in January. Midterm exams are around the corner. And, for the first time this year, all students at CCSC are taking midterms, not just those in grades 9-12.
- **Attendance Violation Failure:** As stated in the Student and Family Handbook, any student who misses more than 15% of the times that a class meets over the course of the semester will automatically fail that specific course. If your child is at risk of an AVF this semester, his/her advisor will call you to discuss the issue. If you're concerned about this and would like to check on the status of your child, please inquire directly with his or her advisor.
- **Early dismissal on December 21st:** On the Friday before the holiday vacation begins, we will dismiss at 11:30.
- **"Like" CCSC on Facebook:** We're posting news and photos. Stay up-to-date with all that's happening.
- **Open House Monday, January 7th, starting at 6PM** for those interested in applying for a spot in 7th, 8th, or 9th grade starting next year. If you know people who might be interested, please help us spread the word.
- **Winter Sports:** Our basketball team rosters are set and both teams are practicing hard in preparation for the upcoming season. There are some scrimmages before the vacation and then official games start up on January 4th. We will have home games every Friday night from January 11 through February 15, with the girls starting at 7:45PM and the boys following at 9:00PM. We hope to see you there, showing your support of our scholar-athletes.

Thank you for reading. Thank you for supporting CCSC and the work that we are doing with *all* of our students. Regardless of what you celebrate, I hope you enjoy spending time with loved ones and friends, and that students return from break rested and recharged for a successful new year.

Caleb Hurst-Hiller
 Head of School