



CAMBRIDGE STREET UPPER SCHOOL

Manuel J. Fernandez, Head of School

Christen Sohn, Assistant Principal

Tiffany Robinson, School Clerk

September 12, 2017

Dear Parents and Caregivers,

At CSUS we have been busy learning about one another as scholars, defining expectations for our learning community, and helping our scholars to see themselves as citizens of the world.

We began this week with a commemoration of 9/11 with a reading by Amarah Rolley Gonsalves and "Taps" by Ryan Augustine, Sarah Solomon and our new band teacher Ms. Chanler. It was a fitting tribute. Particularly poignant for our scholars that 9/11 took on an additional meaning given the devastation that Hurricane Irma has left in the South. Our thoughts are with those from Texas to Florida who have endured so much in the past few weeks.

Last week scholars met in advisory to develop this year's social contract. Representatives from each advisory met with Asst. Principal Sohn to narrow down the elements. The final draft was presented to the entire school community on Friday and was adopted. The 2017-18 Social Contract is:

- Be respectful to everything and everyone's background and diversity
- Commit to your goals and persevere through challenges
- Participate fully and aim high
- Be a leader, show kindness, and radiate confidence

Also, last week all three advisors in each homeroom facilitated a one-on-one goal setting activity with each scholar and helped scholars prioritize their WIN (What I Need) elective choices. Over the next two weeks advisors will help scholars prepare a Listening Conference presentation that will highlight their goals and their WIN choices. I am very impressed with the attention that scholars have given these activities.

We are excited about the second year of our Listening Conferences. Listening Conferences give us the privilege to learn directly from caregivers and scholars about:

- What motivates your scholar?
- How your scholar learns best?
- What challenges may get in the way of learning?
- What are effective redirection strategies?
- What are their goals and how can we support attainment?

Listening Conferences will take place the week of Sept 25th. Your child's advisor or another appropriate staff member will contact you this week to schedule your conference. I hope that you will be able to attend. It is a valuable opportunity for us and we sincerely appreciate your time and contribution.

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Coming up the same week will be our second annual block party on Sept. 28th from 5:30-8:30 pm, We will celebrate our 5th year and recognize the beginning of our 6th year as CSUS. There will be music, food, and a variety of activities. Please join us and let's start the year with a lot of heart and a lot of noise!

In June 2012 TEAM CSUS held a 3 day retreat in preparation for the opening of the new Cambridge Street Upper School. Among our many tasks, we asked ourselves what social justice would look like at the school and listed everyone's contribution. I am proud to say that every year CSUS moves closer to our 2012 vision of social justice. Today only 12 of those team members are still at CSUS. 43 of our current team members joined us between August 2012 and August 2017. The spirit of social justice is ever present and the character of the original team remains. The team has been substantially enhanced with members that have brought innovation, passion and an unyielding drive for equity in our teaching and learning community. We remain committed to social justice in all aspects of our school culture. I am proud to serve with the many educators that work tirelessly to advance our instructional practices and our cultural insights and sensibilities. I trust that you will find CSUS is fortunate to have such an extraordinary team. I encourage you to work in partnership with us on behalf of your child and on school initiatives that support the tenets of academic excellence and social justice. We look forward to a successful and noteworthy 6th year.

Coming up in the months of September and October, CSUS has many activities that you may find interesting. In addition to the block party and listening conferences, this Wednesday night we will hold our first School Site Council meeting, which will meet again on Oct 11th. On Sept. 25th at 6:30pm, CSUS will host a Math curriculum meeting. Oct. 4th we will hold our second PCO. Please join this dynamic caregiver group that successfully supported Dr. Cornel West's visit to CSUS and our end of the year field trips. Oct. 5th marks our sixth *Back to School Night* with a review of the school curriculum, programs and activities. Oct. 26th we will launch the second year of our community engagement series, *Diversity Dialogues*. We will share specific details later this month. We have a busy few weeks ahead and we hope you can join us at these important activities.

Thanks for your continued support. We understand that you have choices and we appreciate you choosing CSUS!

Peace,

Manuel J. Fernandez
Head of School

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