

CRESSKILL HIGH SCHOOL/MIDDLE SCHOOL
One Lincoln Drive Cresskill, NJ 07626 (201) 227-7791, Fax: (201) 567-0028

PRINCIPAL'S PERSPECTIVE

Mr. John Massaro, Principal
jmassaro@cboek12.org

November 22nd, 2021

Dear Cresskill Middle School/High School students and families,

I hope this message finds all families doing well and prepared for an enjoyable Thanksgiving break this week. This school year clearly has been a trying time for all of us, but also a time for us to reflect on what matters most in life. The joy of reopening for in-person learning two weeks ago was more than I anticipated for myself, and many others have expressed a similar feeling. It is genuinely enjoyable to see students and families at the start and end of each day outside, even if I do need to wear a bright neon safety vest!

Our Phase 1 of in-person learning has been in effect for two full weeks now. We thank all families for their cooperation with the new procedures to ensure the utmost traffic safety possible for our students. On behalf of our administrative team, we thank the entire Cresskill community (especially the police, recreation center staff, and library staff!), our teachers, custodians, secretaries, and all other staff members for their constant effort and support to keep this school year moving forward for our students. Each day we see our teachers and students work together with flexibility and resiliency during their classes. I am humbled and inspired by this work and we are all committed to providing the best possible learning experiences for our students in and beyond the classroom, no matter what the circumstances are. The following topics of presentation in this newsletter beautifully illustrate some of the student accomplishments of this school year so far.

In preparation for this newsletter, I have been eager to share the following story of resilience that serves as a microcosm of our current school experience. In the article titled [Highlights of the 2021 girls tennis season in North Jersey](#), Senior Lucia Park and the girls tennis team were cited for displaying incredible toughness when faced with adversity to earn a spot in the state sectional championship match. The excerpt below is a touching summary of that match and the success of these players. We are so proud of their accomplishments as just one example of our students rising to the challenges they face. In a recent conversation with longtime Board of Education Vice-President, Mr. Stephen Moldt, he emphasized that the way we adults model our actions for the students is so critical at this moment in their development. During these times of challenge, we have an important opportunity to demonstrate resilience and influence how they perceive the inevitable challenges that life can throw at us.

In 40 years of coaching Cresskill tennis, Barbara Muller said she never saw anything like it. In the Cougars' unexpected run to the North 1, Group 1 finals, Muller's squad got an all-time comeback win from second-singles player Lucia Park in her team's semifinal match against Glen Rock. After Park split the first two sets with rival Mikayla Kim, she

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trailed 1-5 and love-40 in the third. Muller jokingly said, "I was ready to pack up my things and go."

The bus trip was delayed as Park staved off three match points to win the game. Muller said Park "played out of her mind" as she held off several other match points and won game after game and eventually the set, 7-5. The seventh-seeded Cougars dropped a 3-2 decision to top-seeded Kinnelon in the finals.

While Cresskill hasn't been a title contender for years, Muller said this year's success resulted from the addition of freshman first-singles player Stella Yun and team's superb depth. Twelve different players saw varsity action as the locals got superb play from Sana Varaiya, Ling Ngai, Ashley Jung, Giada Evangelista and Anna Park among others.

"Great depth and tenacity ... and a little stick-to-it-ive-ness," Muller said. "The kids weren't just talented but they were great sports and great citizens. Other coaches always told me my girls were nice and well-mannered. I heard that a lot and I think it's true."

I wish you all a restful and enjoyable Thanksgiving break this week and thank you for your continued support.

Sincerely,

Mr. John Massaro

Principal
Cresskill Middle School/High School
jmassaro@cboek12.org

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Social Media Communication

Please consider following our Cresskill District administrators, staff members, and programs on [Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#). Descriptions, photos, and video clips of daily events in school provide a window into the daily school experience and celebrate the achievements of our students in so many different ways. The list below represents some of the recent highlights this fall:

- The first days of Phase 1 In-Person Learning at the St. Therese school
- High School students in PACT assisting the 6th grade Phase 1 orientation program
- Generous donations to our middle school students from Voorhees Middle School, Dumont Girls on the Run & Harrington Park School
- Cheerleaders competing at the Randolph Rampage cheerleading competition
- National Merit Scholarship Program student award recipients
- Middle School Demarest Farms trip
- Niamh Tobin Athlete of the Week for volleyball
- Senior day events for our fall athletic teams
- Middle School Halloween Party
- Marching band performance at the 74th annual North Jersey Marching Band Festival
- Cresskill 5K event
- Middle School Environmental Club's trip to Flat Rock Brook
- World Languages Honor Society induction ceremony
- CouGears team of the Robotics Club competing in local competition

National Merit Scholarship Program recipients

From a pool of over 1.5 million students who took the 2020 PSAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test last October nationwide, Cresskill High School has multiple students in the Class of 2022 recognized for high achievement. Dana Bahng and Tyler Song earned Semifinalist status in this national competition, while Arihant Birani, Jaeho Cho, Jocelyn Chu, Cynthia Kim, Dylan Kim, Hyun Cho Kim, Irene Kim, Dohoon Kwon, Namhoon Lee, Rachel Oh, and Sunyoung Park received Commended Student status. Congratulations to these fine students for proudly representing our school with such high academic achievement!

World Language Honor Society Induction event

Congratulations to our French, Italian, and Spanish language students who have earned distinction in their respective Honor Societies. The November 1st induction ceremony was a dignified evening event at the Merritt Memorial School and please see this [link](#) for the full program.

Upcoming Event: 2021 Fall Drama "The Great All-American Musical Disaster"

The Cresskill Principal Players proudly present "The Great All-American Musical Disaster" by Tim Kelly on Friday December 3rd & Saturday December 4th at 7:30pm. Tickets are \$8 in advance and \$10 at the door. They can be purchased by going to [Box Office at CresskillMusic.org](#), or on in-person days during lunch and after school starting 11/29/21. Please come out to support the show, the cast and crew have done a spectacular job this fall overcoming many obstacles to keep this performance alive because the show must go on!

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Upcoming Event: 8th Grade Washington D.C Class Trip Parent Meeting

Ms. Taha, Assistant Principal, will host this meeting on Tuesday, 11/30/21, at 7:00pm on Zoom using this [link](#). We are eager and excited to move forward with this trip for the students after a hiatus the past two years.

Student Clubs & Activities

The 2021-2022 Middle School Club List is posted on all grade level Google Classrooms and on the Student Life section of school website for [high school clubs](#) and [middle school clubs](#). Please take the time to review our club offerings and consider joining activities that spark your interest. Each club has an associated Google Classroom and you can find the classroom code within each individual club page. If you have questions about joining the Google Classroom, or about the club in general, please contact the listed advisor.

“No Place for Hate” Pledge

Earlier in November we posted the No Place for Hate pledge on the grade level Google Classrooms for students to sign. Last year, our school earned “Gold Star” recognition for exceptional commitment to the No Place for Hate program. With public displays of hate on the rise, it is more important than ever for schools to commit to programs that clearly define expectations in behavior for all members of the community. Everyone has a role to play in combating bias and bullying as a means to stop the escalation of hate. No Place for Hate, an initiative of the Anti-Defamation League organization, offers the opportunity for school communities to work together to combat prejudice and enhance a culture of respect. Students, please review the Google Classroom details and digitally sign the pledge. We thank you for your support of this important initiative.

Student Organization Elections

In early October, campaigns and elections were conducted for both the middle school and high school Student Organizations. We extend many thanks to Ms. Lana Shtofmakher, Ms. Iris Kim, and Ms. Michelle Taliento for organizing the events and to Mr. Shane Kress, video productions teacher, for managing the candidate speech videos. The function of the Student Organization is a fine tradition in our school, and one that advocates for students in their school experience. The leadership of these students has been an important aspect of our work to implement Phase 1 of in-person learning at the St. Therese school. We commend all students who made the effort to campaign before their peers; regardless of election outcomes, everyone involved represents the talent and courage of our student body! Congratulations to the following elected officers:

6th grade

Co-Treasurers	Hila Mor, Sejin Chun
Co-Presidents	Ayden Chung, Semin Chun

7th grade

Secretary	Hannah Jamieson
Treasurer	Hawon Song

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Vice-President Claire Kim
President Olivia Kim

8th grade

Secretary Isabelle Son
Treasurer Alexander Choi
Vice-President Wesley Chu
President Victor Hsu

9th Grade Class Representatives Ryan Fischer, George Koprowski, Erin Park
10th Grade Class Representatives Erin Fahy, Bryan Hwang, Jack Semenoro
11th Grade Class Representatives Alexander Botea, Esther Lee
12th Grade Class Representatives Sami Distell, Dylan Kim

Student Organization Secretary Glory Moon
Student Organization Treasurer Jacob Lee
Student Organization Vice-President Jack Zeigher
Student Organization Co-Presidents Sidney Hamburger & Tyler Song

National Honor Society Tutoring

As we have transitioned to Phase 1 in-person learning at the St. Therese school building, the Cresskill High School National Honor Society students are offering free tutoring from 3:00-3:30pm via Zoom on select days. Please see this [link](#) to obtain updated information as this valued tradition continues to develop to suit our learning needs and situation.

Covid-Related Procedures, guidelines update

Please take time to carefully review the [2021-2022 Cresskill School District Covid-Related Procedures](#) document that includes both districtwide and school-specific topics. A district-wide update regarding travel guidelines was sent via email on Friday 11/19/21.

Item Drop-Off

The following procedures and expectations for student item drop-offs during the school day:

- No lunch deliveries or drop-offs are allowed - students are permitted to bring a brown-bag lunch with them each morning or purchase lunch from the full-service cafeteria. Students may also order prepared meals through the [HSA/KPA lunch order program](#).
- Occasional emergency drop-off of essential items may be accommodated by the main office staff.
- Excessive use of the emergency drop-off procedures will be addressed by administration if necessary.
- Please note that glass bottles and containers are not allowed in the building

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Student Absence/Early Release Procedures

Call 201-227-7791 and select 3 for the high school or 4 for the middle school

Select 1 for early dismissal or 2 for absence

Please provide student name & grade, parent/guardian name and contact phone number, and reason for early dismissal or absence

Students who are aware of an early dismissal when they first report to school should obtain an early release note at the main office when they first arrive at school. This procedure will expedite students being dismissed from class and waiting on time near the main office for dismissal.

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