



The Freshman Guide

ADVICE FOR FRESHMEN BY FRESHMEN
AT CAMBRIDGE RINDGE & LATIN SCHOOL



Dear Class of 2020,

We are both so excited to be welcoming you all to Rindge this year! CRLS is truly a one-of-a-kind place and we guarantee you that the next four years will be full of growth, fun, and adventure! The best advice we can offer all of you is to embrace the next four years with an open-mind, positive spirit, alacrity for challenge, and respect for those around you as well as for yourself!

In high school there is inevitably going to be lots of change and there will be lots of ups and downs. Schoolwork can get stressful, friendships can hit bumps in the road, and life happens. But having loyal friends, good relationships with your teachers, and a lot of love for yourself will make these challenging times into moments of growth and insight. Nothing can happen unless you make it happen, so be your own guide through life!

This past summer we interviewed five rising sophomores to share their experiences and insight as past freshmen. They are: Grace Austin ('19), Megumi Kirby ('19), Alex Sadock ('19), Rafael Salas ('19), and Sophie Wright ('19). We would like to thank them all for being a part of this year's Guide!

You can catch any of us and your Freshman Mentors anytime this year, so please be sure to come up with your questions or strike up a conversation! It's gonna be lit! Special shout out to Ms. Lozada for being such a great support for everyone here at Rindge and to Amy Spencer for making this all creatively possible.

We hope this year's Freshman Guide helps you with your first year here at CRLS. Welcome to Rindge!

Yours truly,
Paul Sullivan ('18) and Caroline Workman ('18)



I. OUR VALUES

Several years ago, former Principal Dr. Saheed invited the entire CRLS student body to brainstorm and then vote on three words that reflect the primary values of our school. The words that everyone (fittingly) chose were **opportunity**, **diversity**, and **respect**. You'd be hard pressed to find a school that more completely embodies these core values! At CRLS, we truly live "The Falcon Way,": first, by pursuing academic, social, and civil responsibilities; second, by embracing and celebrating diversity in culture, ethnicity, religion, race, sexuality, gender, and ability, and, third, by demonstrating respect by taking total responsibility for our actions in our learning environment and in the community at large.

2. GETTING AROUND

The school is large and can be confusing at first. You only have a few minutes to get from class to class so you must move quickly to get there on time. You can get a copy of the school map in the Office and your parents/guardians will get one at Open House. **Or, [click here!](#)**

Q. Do you have any tips for getting around the first few days of school? Was there anything you did to "learn the layout"?

"During the first week or two of school, teachers are standing outside their rooms and are happy to point you in the right direction. I also often used the signs that are displayed in the hallways which direct you to your classroom." -Sophie W.

"In preparation for the first day of school, I set my class schedule as the background on my phone so I could easily read my classroom numbers in between classes. I also looked over the zone map that I found on the CRLS website to help me navigate the school. Finding other students with the same classes or rooms near your classes is also helpful in making sure you all end up in the right place." -Megumi K.



3. YOUR SMALL LEARNING COMMUNITY & COMMUNITY MEETING

CRLS organizes its students into four “small learning communities” called “C,” “R,” “L,” and “S.” Learning communities are randomly assigned and each one has its own Dean of Curriculum, Dean of Students, and Guidance Counselors. The small learning communities help organize the student body, but do not dictate the classes into which you’ll be placed—or which friends you’ll see in the hallways. Your **Community Meeting (CM)** meets every day for 15 minutes and is made up of the same teachers and students for your four years at CRLS. It’s designed to be a place where you can get important information from your Deans and Guidance Counselor (such as this online Freshman Guide and your CRLS Student Handbook!), discuss important issues as they arise in the CRLS community, and build solid relationships with a smaller group of teachers and other students. CM’s are designed to represent the wide diversity of students we have here at Rindge.

4. GET TO KNOW THEM

Three important people you should get to know are your Guidance Counselor, your Dean of Curriculum, and your Dean of Students. During the first week of school, your Guidance Counselors will introduce themselves to you. You’ll want to talk to your Counselors if you have questions about classes because they can help you with your schedule and plans for the future. They will even write you a letter of recommendation for college later in high school. Your Counselors are also there if you just need help in any aspect of your life. Feel free to talk with them about anything. LC’s also have school psychologists and social workers; this is important to know if you need or want extra support. Your Dean of Curriculum focuses on curriculum and program decisions, while your Dean of Students manages student discipline, attendance, and services. All of these great people are really important and will play an active role in your freshman year. Get to know them! If your parent/s or guardian/s have any questions, they can contact your Counselor, your Deans, or the Parent Liaison, Greta Hardina, by calling the main office at 617.349.6630.

Q. Do you know your Guidance Counselor, Dean of Students, or Dean of Curriculum? How has one (or more) of them been helpful to you?

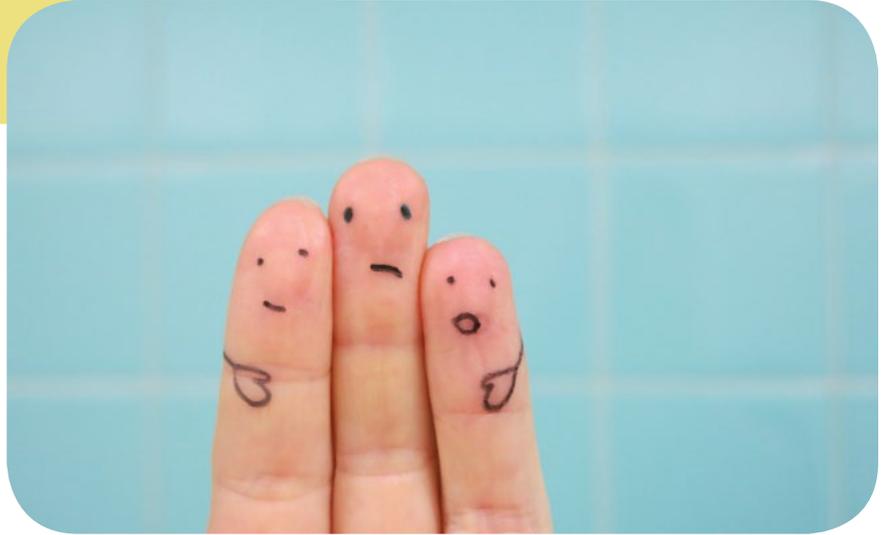
“I’d say they know me pretty well. It’s important for them to really get to know you because in high school there will be times where you might trip up and need a chance to be understood.” -Rafael S.

“I think that creating a strong bond with your guidance counselor is important in your freshman year. My guidance counselor has been very helpful when I had problems in my schedule and when I needed recommendations for courses to take. I highly recommend staying in contact with your guidance counselor and asking them any questions you might have, whether they are about changing courses or recommendations for summer programs.” -Sophie W.

“It is essential to know your Guidance Counselor, Dean of Students, and Dean of Curriculum. Knowing these Learning Community leaders will help you succeed and thrive inside and outside the classroom. If you do not know these figures at CRLS, do not be afraid to approach them and introduce yourself!” -Alex S.

5. FRESHMAN MENTORS

Your 9th Grade Mentors will welcome you during Freshman Orientation and will help you transition to life at CRLS and what it means to be in high school. They will be with you throughout the year and will visit your Community Meeting once a week to get to know you, share their own experiences, and help you make the most out of your freshman year and CRLS experience. They are psyched to get to know you!



6. SAFETY & SECURITY

CRLS prides itself on being a safe place. Several Safety Specialists and our school resource officer, Nicole Pacheco, are stationed around the campus to make sure that the community is safe and secure. Get to know them—they're important people who will likely be around for your entire high school experience!

7. STUDENT I.D.

Your student identification card is important. Without your ID, you cannot check out a book in the library, and **you can't get into school dances**. You can use your ID to get a discount at sporting events and games. Your ID is a photo ID and useful to have before you get your driver's license. An ID is free to get at all times and Safety and Security will be on hand during the first week of school to make IDs for all freshmen.



8. MBTA HALF-FARE STUDENT (AKA, STUDENT CHARLIE CARD) & MBTA MONTHLY PASSES

The MBTA will offer the following student MBTA passes this year:

Student Stored Value Charlie Card:

The Student Stored Value Charlie Card, or S-Card, will be offered to CRLS students. Students may request and pick-up this pass at the CRLS Main Office at any time during the month. This pass does not have a value assigned to it. When loading fare money onto the pass, two pass options will be available for students to purchase which may be used continuously throughout the school year and summer (September 2016 through August 2017).

1. A half-fare pass option will be available. Under this option, you can elect to load a dollar amount of your choice onto the pass. It will allow you to travel on the local bus, subway, express bus and commuter rail at a “pay as you go” 50% discounted fare. For example, if riding the bus, the cost of a single ride is \$1.70. With the S-Card, the cost of a single ride will be \$0.85. Passes can be loaded on a local or express bus and at a MBTA fare vending machine at any time during the month. If you do not plan on taking the bus or the train that much, or cannot commit to paying for and holding onto a MBTA Monthly Student Pass each month, the Half-Fare Pass is your best option. You just put money on it whenever you need to!

2. New this year, students may also elect to add a monthly 7-day student pass to the S-Card at the fare vending machine. The price of this monthly pass is \$30.00. This pass will allow students to travel on the local bus, subway, and express bus unlimited. The monthly student pass is not valid on any commuter rail zones, including IA. This pass can be loaded at a MBTA fare vending machine between the 1st and 15th of each month. After the 15th, if the student adds a monthly 7-day student pass, the pass will be available at the start of the following month. You definitely save money when purchasing the monthly 7-daypass, especially if you plan on taking the bus or train multiple times a day and on the weekends.

Be sure to hold onto your pass and **not lose it**. If you have any questions or concerns, you can always check in at the Main Office.

Q. Did you get a Student Charlie Card or a Monthly Student Pass during the school year?

“Yes, I did. Not every month. I recommend that you get them on the winter months because walking in the snow is a struggle. And when you know it’s close to the end of the month, listen closely to the morning announcements to find out when is the due date to buy a pass.” -Rafael S.

“Yes, I got a Monthly Pass and it helped me greatly because I did not need to worry about having money when leaving for school. The monthly bus pass also helped me save money going to and from school.” -Alex S.

“As I live close enough to walk or bike to school, that is generally how I got to school everyday during the school year, so I did not get a Student Charlie Card or Monthly Pass.” -Megumi K.

9. LOCKERS

You will not be able to choose where your locker is located; it is given to you by your learning community. The cost of a locker is \$5. To rent one, you will need to go to your Dean with the \$5, and he or she will assign you one.

Q. Did you use a locker? If so, why? If not, why?

“Yes, I used a locker. It was very handy for storing my sports equipment for after school games and practices. I would recommend getting a locker close to your homeroom, this will make it easier to store or grab items on the go.” -Alex S.

“I did not use a locker because I always had my backpack and sports bag with me, and the location of my locker did not correlate with my classes. In the end, having a locker would have taken more time out of my day. The only time that you hold your belongings is when walking from class to class. Once you are in class, you can put them next to your seat.” -Sophie W.

“Although lockers may be useful for some students, I didn’t think having a locker would make my day easier. I preferred to carry all my binders and textbooks with me because I took them home everyday so I could read over what I did in class if I was having trouble with homework.” -Megumi K.



10. LUNCH!

Lunch lasts 30 minutes. Depending on where your third period class is, you either have Lunch A, B, or C. This three-lunch structure is new for 2016-17! Generally speaking, here’s how lunch periods are structured: If your period 3 class is in the Rindge Building on the 1st/4th/5th floor, in RSTA, or in 2nd/3rd floor science rooms, you have Lunch A. If your period 3 class is in the Rindge Building on the 2nd/3rd floor and is not a science class, you have Lunch B. If your period 3 class is in the Arts Building or War Memorial, you have Lunch C. [See bell schedule and lunch times >>](#)

There are a ton of places to eat on campus. First, there are two cafeterias in the building – the Main Cafeteria and the Media Cafeteria – that serve tasty and affordable food. There are also approved off-campus places to eat, though they’re more expensive. On Cambridge Street, you can try eating at Darwin’s, an independent café and sandwich shop, Harvard Market, which is a small market that also serves sandwiches and wraps, and Mona Lisa’s, which serves pizza. On the Broadway Side, you’ve got the famous Angelo’s, which has pizza and hot fries, Broadway Market, a small, more expensive supermarket with hot food and a salad bar, and Starbucks. At lunch, all of these places are crowded so plan ahead. Of course, you can always bring your lunch too!





II. FRIENDS

Socially, it's a big shift, to go from your Upper School to the high school. After going to school with the same group of kids for a relatively long time, it can seem overwhelming to see all the new faces. But after a while, all those faces will become familiar and you'll make many more friends.

Q. Did you make a lot of new friends this year? What's the best way to get to know people?

"I definitely got to know new people this year. I think that I did this through being active in classes. As you know, every year you are in up to eight different classes. Each class has around 20-30 students. If you are open to talking to new people and actively participating in class, you are guaranteed to make new friends and create bonds with peers." -Sophie W.

"The best ways to make friends obviously are through a club or sport. But another trick is try to make a friend in class in the period before lunch so you can both go to lunch together." -Rafael S.

"Since I didn't go to a Cambridge Public School for middle or elementary school, I only knew the handful of people who came from my school, plus a few others I knew from outside of school. When meeting new people, it is important to keep an open mind. Resist the urge to always stay with the same group of people, and take time to get to know other people and even introduce them to your other friends." -Megumi K.

Q. Was it hard to make friends with upperclassmen?

"It was somewhat easy to make friends with upperclassmen at CRLS. The best way to meet and befriend upperclassmen is to join clubs because most clubs are run by juniors and seniors." -Alex S.

"Since my older sister was an upperclassman (currently a rising college freshman) I already knew some of her friends, but a capella was the main way I met upperclassmen. Getting to know them wasn't hard because we had a common interest." -Megumi K.

"It wasn't very difficult to make friends with upperclassmen. In clubs and sports, there are students from many different grades. If you get involved with either a club or a sport, do not be afraid to interact with upperclassmen because, in my experience, they are open to making friends." -Sophie W.

12. SPORTS TEAMS

CRLS offers a wide variety of sports, including baseball, golf, swimming, football, cheerleading, crew, and soccer, to name a few. There's a sport for everyone of every ability. There are three seasons for sports; fall, winter, and spring. The teams are categorized into Freshman, Junior Varsity, and Varsity. Some are come-one-come-all, while some require tryouts. To find out about a sport you might be interested in, the best thing to do is [check out the CRLS athletics website >>](#)

Q. Are you on a sports team? What advice would you give to someone who might like to try out for a team?

"I played football and I wasn't that good at first, but I got a little better. If you're not confident doing a sport, do it anyway especially freshmen year because sports teams don't expect as much, so you don't have to be that good unless you want more playtime. Also, when you do a sport, you're not just an athlete, you're a "student athlete" so that means school comes first."
-Rafael S.

"I am on the CRLS golf, hockey, and tennis teams. I would recommend that anybody interested in playing a sport at CRLS attend the meetings that are hosted in the CRLS gym by the athletic director before every sports season. I also would recommend signing up well before the deadline for sign-ups, so as not to miss them." -Alex S.

"I did sailing, diving, and lacrosse. The best thing to do if you want to do a sport is try out for something you are truly interested in. Also try new things. I didn't even know diving was a sport until I tried out for the swim team, but I thought it looked cool so I tried it and it was a blast! Freshmen year isn't as stressful in terms of tryouts because most of the time there is a Freshmen team." -Grace A.





13. THE ARTS

Most people know CRLS sports teams are award winning, but did you know the arts department is too? Ever since the Massachusetts Educational Theater Guild High School Festival was created, Rindge has won a well-deserved reputation as one of the most successful and creative theater programs in the state (Matt Damon and Ben Affleck are Festival alums, to name a few). You can take an arts class or be involved after school in one (or more!) of all the arts. Audition for the world-traveling Jazz Ensemble, perfect your floor work with Modern Dance Company, or sing your heart out in acapella! There's music, dance, theater, ceramics, painting, sculpture, photography, and tons more. [Learn more about the Visual & Performing Arts \(VPA\) Dept. >>](#)

Q. What was your experience in the arts program?

“One of my favorite classes this past year was Beginning Piano. In this class, I was given approximately an hour per day to practice playing the piano, which helped me improve drastically over the course of the semester.” -Alex S.

“In my freshman year I joined the a capella group Sassafras and also took the Foundations of Art course. I have had a great experience in both the Visual and Performing Art programs. I have always liked singing and visual arts, and I was able to improve in both areas this past year with the help of a capella leaders and my art teacher Ms. Menges.” -Megumi K.

“In my first semester of freshman year, I took the RSTA Exploratory class. RSTA stands for the Rindge School of Technical Arts. This is a great class to take in your freshman year because you go through cycles of a variety of different technical arts courses including culinary, digital studio, carpentry, auto mechanics, and many more. RSTA exploratory introduces you to a mix of different subjects that will most likely spark an interest that you never knew you had.” -Sophie W.

14. CLUBS

Want to get together with people who share your interests? There are over 30 clubs in the school, ranging from the Model United Nations Club to Robotics to the Music Production Club. There are new clubs forming every year. You can [check out the current list of clubs on the school website >>](#)

Q. Are you involved in any clubs? What are they and would you recommend them to newcomers next year? What do you like about them and how do you participate?

“I was involved in the Sisters on the Runway club, which raises awareness about domestic violence. In the beginning of the year, I attended meetings for many clubs to see which ones I was interested in. I suggest that you try out as many clubs that intrigue you. Involving yourself in clubs will only benefit you when it comes to making friends, creating connections, and even applying to colleges.” -Sophie W.

“The clubs that I participated in this past year and would recommend to any of you are Sisters on the Runway and Falcon Friends. I participated in these clubs by going to weekly meetings and fundraisers. My favorite club was Sisters on the Runway because we raised money for victims of domestic violence, a cause that I care about deeply. In my opinion Falcon Friends is also one of the most influential and positive clubs at CRLS. Falcon Friends gives students at CRLS students a chance to interact with some of the amazing people that are in the CRLS special education program.” -Alex S.

“I am involved in a capella, and recently started attending the Charles River Cleanups. I would recommend a capella to any student who likes singing. Auditioning is a great way to meet new people with the same interests as you. As a group we perform in the winter and spring jams held at the school, and are also given opportunities to perform for other events outside of school. We generally meet two to three times a week before school, when we discuss future song choices or learn our songs. The Charles River Cleanup Project is another club I joined recently and would recommend. I went to a Cleanup with a few of my friends and we had a fun time meeting other club members and cleaning up the Charles River along the way. The club picks up litter while walking along the Charles River for an hour every Sunday and anyone is free to attend if they find the time.” -Megumi K.



15. BEING TARDY & ABSENT

The block system has shown us that you need all of your assigned class time to cover the required material and learn successfully. For this reason, the attendance policy is strict at CRLS, and it's important to take note!

There are two types of absences: excused and unexcused. An "excused absence" means missing class for a legitimate reason, while an "unexcused absence" means being absent without an approved excuse. Don't skip class or Community Meeting! CRLS is very strict about this. If you are unexcused absent from class four times in one semester, you will face an Attendance Violation Failure (AVF), which means receiving a 10% reduction for the final term grade for the class. (Every three unexcused tardies equals an unexcused absence, so keep track of those too.)

Your teachers will be understanding about your being late the first couple of days, but after that, it's on you to be on time. It also helps to know if it's a "silver" or a "black" day at the beginning of the day so you know where you're going for classes that alternate days, like gym or health.

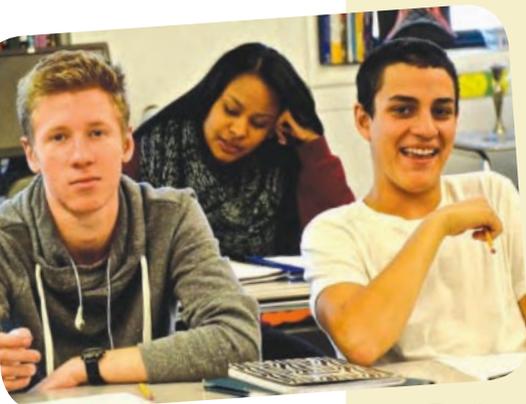
If you are sick or need to miss school for a legitimate reason, your parent/guardian must call the school to let them know you won't be coming that day. **This call must be made by the morning of the day you will be missing school.** If you are going to be late, you must also have your parent/guardian call your Dean of Student's office by that time.

As a special note: students should know that being sent home to change inappropriate clothing does NOT count as an excused absence, so be sure to follow the dress code! [See more information on the attendance policy >>](#)

16. THE CLASSROOM

We are so fortunate to be students at one of the best schools in Massachusetts and even the country! There are so many amazing opportunities at CRLS to learn and grow both inside and outside of the classroom, so take advantage of as many as you can!

You're in high school now, and every little thing counts. At the beginning of each course, your teachers will break down their individual grading methods, but in all of your classes, homework, tests and quizzes, and class participation are very important. If you fall behind in one of those areas, try to get back on track by going an extra mile in another one, and always take assignments very seriously. Advocate for yourself by communicating with your teachers and going to extra help sessions after school. Every little thing you can do to keep your grades up counts!



Students from CRLS have the opportunity to go anywhere they would like for college. Everyone sees themselves in their own unique place for their future. CRLS graduates have gone on to attend places like M.I.T., University of Massachusetts, Harvard, Bryn Mawr, Princeton, Bunker Hill Community College, and many others. Some students go straight to work or take a gap year to explore their options.

At CRLS you also have the opportunity to learn a trade that makes real money right out of school! The RSTA program offers lots of in-depth training in different fields such as automotive, culinary arts, health assisting, commercial design, and bio-tech lab work. In your freshman year, through Exploratory, you have the opportunity to try out all the different types of subject areas, like culinary arts or graphic design, before choosing one that you like best. If you stick with RSTA throughout high school, you have the opportunity to do internships and get a job in a field you enjoy!

17. CHANGING YOUR SCHEDULE

It is important to know that if you are having trouble in a class, you need to talk to your teacher and let your Guidance Counselors know! You might be in the wrong level class and they can help you fix it so you are properly challenged. Changes must be made within the **FIRST TWO WEEKS** of classes. With the block system, it's really important to make changes as soon as possible. Things such as level changes, gaps in your schedule, or incorrect class assignments are accepted reasons to request a change. All changes must be approved by your Dean of Curriculum.



18. THE FIRST GRADING PERIOD OF THE SEMESTER

The first grading period is the first 45 days of each semester (Term 1 and Term 3). This is the period when you make your mark. Classes here at Rindge use an A–F grading system. As the saying goes, “you never have a second chance to make a first impression.” If you spend your time making only social connections and no time on school work, you might not be so happy with your first report card.

Q. What advice can you give to incoming students regarding their grades?

“Even though this is going to be your first year of highschool, it is important to work hard and start off the year with a strong GPA. Freshman year will most likely be the easiest year of highschool, so it is a good idea to create a sturdy foundation for yourself now, so that you have something to build on once you start taking harder courses.” -Sophie W.

“Never ever compare yourself to another student because it can bring down your confidence or other peers. All students have different strengths, and sometimes you just have to work harder than other peers, and that’s ok.” -Rafael S.

“I would say focus more on the work in the class and how you can improve. You won’t always get the grade that you want, and it won’t help to be stressing about something when you can improve. If you want to boost your grade, it is helpful to go in during lunch or before/after school (if the teacher is alright with it).” -Grace A.

19. ACADEMIC SUPPORT AND TUTORING

CRLS provides Homework Center in the CRLS library every day after school for all students and free tutors for students who request academic help. You can get help with a specific subject by asking your Guidance Counselor or by visiting the Tutoring Center in the Rindge Building to submit an application. You and your tutor will develop a plan for when you will meet, but you must be responsible about showing up, since tutors are volunteers from the community who give their time. You can also get help from your own classroom teachers. You just need to ask them when they are available for extra help.

Q. Have you ever used any of the tutoring services available at CRLS? How helpful were they? Was there any conflict having to do with time (such as being on a sports team)?

“I have not used the tutoring services, but heard they were really helpful.” -Grace A.

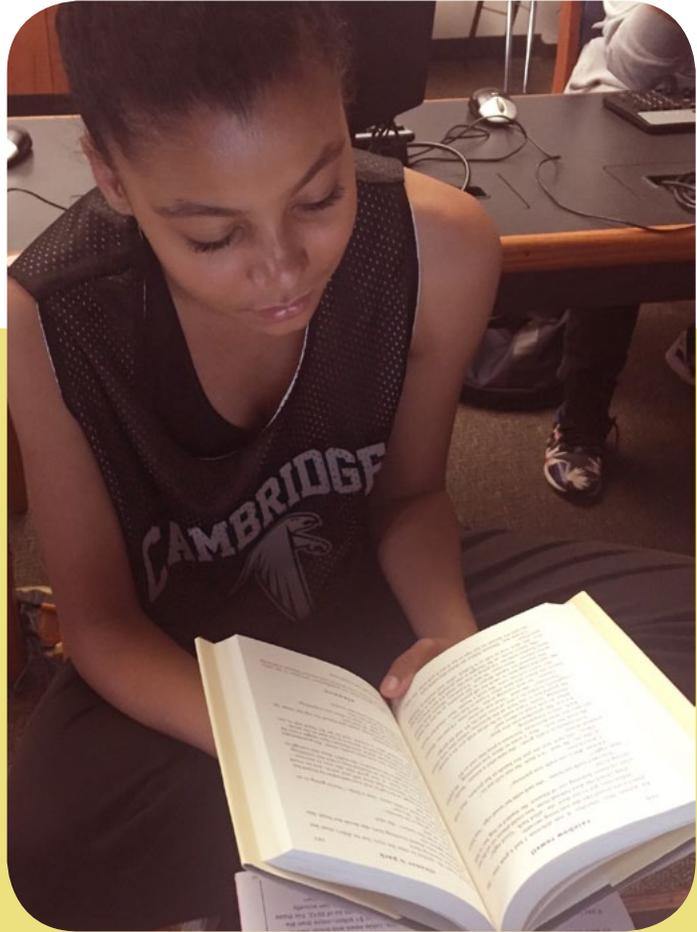
*“I often go after school to see teachers if I have any questions about essays or homework. Not only does that help your understanding of the class, but it also helps you to create a strong relationship with your teachers, which will be useful when you need to start asking for recommendations.”
-Sophie W.*



20. USING THE LIBRARY

There are two fantastic libraries close by and open for your use: the Pearl K. Wise Library (school library), and the Cambridge Public Library. In order to check out books or use computers or Chromebooks, you need to have your student ID. [See the website for our school library >>](#)

As your teachers are bound to show you, the website is fantastic for research. It offers links for informational databases, how-to's for research papers, and tools that will help you create a bibliography quickly and efficiently. Knowing how to use these tools will save you time, and many classes at Rindge will have built-in research tutorials, led by the librarians, to make sure that you know how to use these resources to your full advantage! The Cambridge Public Library also grants you access to computers, movies, and CDs to rent, and thousands of books. It even has a cool Teen Room just for you!



Q. Do you ever use the School Library or the Cambridge Public library next to the campus? Is it easy to access books if you need them?

“Definitely use the CRLS Library (and the Homework Center there). I use the school library to print essays, study, access resources, and do group projects. And the librarians are really helpful for when you’re doing a research paper or project and you need to find sources to back your claim. I also use the Teen Room in the Cambridge Public Library. These are awesome places to get your work done. We’re lucky because some high schools don’t have these resources.” -Rafael S.

“I love going to the School Library. It is a great place to print out an assignment, work on a project, or study for an upcoming exam. The librarians at CRLS are also extremely helpful resources when it comes to writing essays and finding sources. One of my favorite parts about the CRLS library is that the librarians always have great books to recommend for your enjoyment.” -Alex S.

“I use both libraries for research. They have a lot of books that are relevant to curriculum. It is easy to access them, but just make sure you turn in your books once you are done using them because that can become an issue...” -Grace A.

21. SCHOOL E-MAIL

Use of personal e-mail addresses such as Gmail, Yahoo, Comcast, etc. is not permitted during the school day. The only e-mail you are allowed to use is your school e-mail. You will be receiving a CRLS e-mail account through your learning community at the beginning of the year. If there is a paper you need to print at school, be sure to send it to your CRLS e-mail address because it is the only e-mail account you will be able to access!

Your CRLS e-mail address is formatted like this:
(Year of graduation)(First initial)(Last name)@cpsd.us
[e.g., 20jsmith@cpsd.us]

Since all of you are in the Class of 2020 (a cool class to be!), your e-mail will be (20) (first initial) (last name) @cpsd.us. You can e-mail anyone at CRLS this way! Feel free to e-mail any of the people who have contributed to this Guide with any questions or advice!

HANDY LOGIN INFO!

Be sure to take a peek at this tech resources doc – it's full of helpful info on how to login to e-mail, GoogleDocs, Aspen, and more.

[See doc >>](#)

22. ASPEN AND NAVIANCE

Aspen is an essential online tool that keeps teachers and students connected and organized. The Aspen homepage displays school-wide bulletins and announcements. Through Aspen, you can access your transcript for your entire four years, and request courses. Additionally, Aspen is a place where teachers can post assignments, deadlines, and grades—if you're unclear about your current performance in a class, you can check Aspen to get up-to-date grades, and adjust yourself accordingly!

Your Guidance Counselor will set you up with a Naviance account. Through Naviance, you can see your GPA, and there are lots of useful tools such as a resume builder if you need to create a resume for a job. Naviance becomes most relevant as you start the college process, as it serves as the vehicle for you, your guidance counselor, and teachers to submit materials and recommendations. It is also very useful because it shows information about hundreds of schools and, based on your grades and interests, it even recommends certain schools.

[Login to Aspen and Naviance >>](#)

23. OPEN HOUSES & TEACHER CONFERENCES

Open Houses happen each semester to give parents/guardians a chance to follow your schedule and meet your teachers to find out more about the classes you are taking. Teacher Conferences happen once each semester after the first progress reports come out. (The good thing about progress reports is that they still give you time to improve your behavior/grade before the end of the term.) Teacher Conferences take place during the day and night so parents/guardians can access your teachers at times convenient for them. They can sign up for appointment times online or in person. Your teachers want to meet the people in your life, and parents/guardians can always contact your teachers by phone, Aspen, or e-mail as well to connect more.

Q. What advice do you have for incoming freshmen about Open Houses and Teacher Conferences?

“You should encourage your family members to attend Open Houses and Teacher Conferences if they can because they allow teachers to give valuable feedback about how you are doing in a class and feedback about how you can potentially improve.” -Alex S.

“If there is any teacher or class you are feeling funky about or something, try to have your parent/guardian go to a conference or Open house to connect and get more information on what the class is like.” -Grace A.

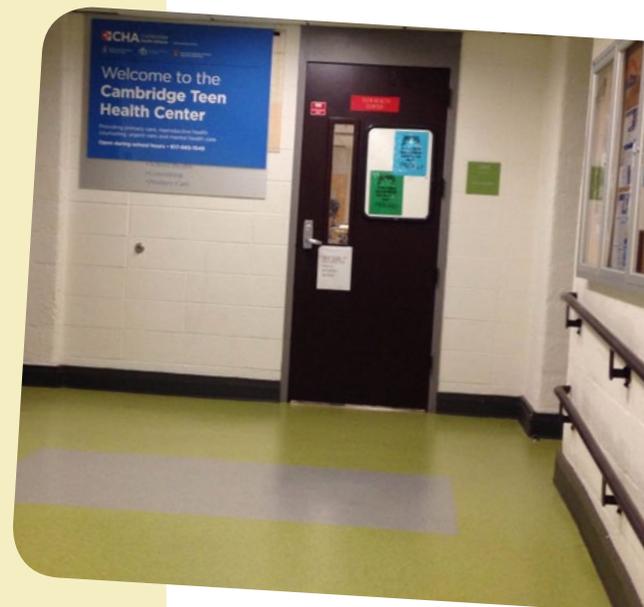
24. THE TEEN HEALTH CENTER

Behind the Teen Health Center door you will find the CRLS Nurse’s office, where you can go if you’re not feeling well during the school day, and the Teen Health Center, which functions as a clinic for the Cambridge Health Alliance. For the CRLS Nurse’s office, you need to get a red pass from your Learning Community office to ensure you’re going for a legitimate reason. Without one of these passes, they can’t see you. At the Teen Health Center, you can make an appointment to see a physician or counselor about your health or your body, for a physical, or if you just want to talk about your life. It’s completely confidential. The Teen Health Center is located in Room 1204 and is open during the school day and after school for appointments.

Q. Have you ever used the Teen Health Center? Can you comment on its purpose and value?

“I haven’t used the Teen Health Center, but many teachers and people who work there have commented on it and explained how they can help and it seems like it is very useful.” -Grace A.

“I only went there once because I was sick, but I know you can get physicals there for sports and anything else you would need, which is really convenient.” -Rafael S.



25. WRAP UP

Q. What has been your favorite thing about this year at CRLS?

“My favorite thing I did this year was running for School Committee Representative because I definitely stepped out of my comfort zone. It was a very new experience for me and I learned a lot from it. I’m glad I was the only freshmen running, so that means I now have more experience and I learned from my mistakes.” -Rafael S.

“My favorite thing about my past year at CRLS was going to school sports games, theater shows and other extracurricular events. Attending events that are hosted by CRLS outside of school hours helped me meet new people and get exposure to all the amazing things that take place within CRLS.” -Alex S.

“My favorite thing about CRLS was the extracurriculars. The sports I did were not only fun, but I met a lot of people through them. This goes for extracurriculars as well. Plus, it lets you try out new things and see what you are interested in which is always worth it.” -Grace A.

“One of my favorite things about my first year at CRLS has been the teachers. Although some concepts were hard to grasp, I felt that for the most part my teachers did a really good job of teaching and explaining things thoroughly. I was also impressed by the dedication of some of my teachers who stayed after school or came to school early to help students individually.” -Megumi K.

“The spirit that CRLS has is one of my favorite experiences as a freshman. Each and every student contributes something to the community and helps create an environment that allows you to get the best out of your high school experience, socially and academically.” -Sophie W.

Q. Any other advice for the incoming class of 2020?

“I encourage you to enter your freshman year being open to changes such as making friends, involving yourself in new activities, and taking charge of your academic career.” -Sophie W.

“My biggest tip to incoming freshmen is to participate in extracurriculars and clubs. It is a great way to meet new people and make new friends.” -Alex S.

“Always be confident in your work and your passions. Never ever compare yourself to others. You are what you are. Make friends that you know will last for all four years of high school.” -Rafael S.

“My advice for all of you is to remember to participate and engage. At CRLS you have the opportunity to join a variety of sports teams and clubs, and you shouldn’t take that for granted. They are a great way to do what you love while meeting new people who share your passions.” -Megumi K.

“I would say that you should try to get involved in a lot of things you think are interesting because that is how you meet people. Also, try to go to as many school sports games as you can because they are super fun and it is awesome to see everyone come together. In general, you do you and try new things out if you think they could be fun and interesting. Wayne Gretsky once said, “You miss 100% of the shots you don’t take.” -Grace A.

EDITOR BIOS

Hey Class of 2020! My name is **Paul Sullivan** and I am a junior here at CRLS! I am so excited to get to know all of you this year and am very grateful to have had the opportunity to put together this guide for you with Caroline Workman and Ms. Lozada. I hope you will find it very helpful over the course of the next few weeks. If you see me in the hall, please don't hesitate to say hello, ask a question, or start a conversation! Here at Rindge, I have been a part of student government since freshman year and currently serve as one of the Student Representatives to the School Committee. I've been involved in Falcon Friends and Model UN since freshman year and currently serve on the leadership boards for both of these clubs. I have been a part of the theatre department since my freshman year and have performed in the Spring Plays production, last year's fall musical, and in CRLS's 2016 entry for the Massachusetts Theatre Guild Festival. This fall I am stage managing the production of In The Heights and will serve as one of the Student Leaders of the Drama Department. Alongside Dr. Weaver, I took part in National History Day where I was fortunate enough to place sixth overall in the nation. I am also involved in Education Club because I place so much value on education. I encourage all of you to get involved in any of the extracurriculars above as well as any of the amazing clubs, sports, arts, and other opportunities there are here. My biggest advice to you is to just be open to new activities, people, ideas, and perspectives during your freshman year and your whole entire time at Rindge. Also, remember: the most important relationship you have in life is the one you have with yourself, so remember to always do what is right for you. See you around this year!



Hello! My name is **Caroline Workman** and I am a junior at CRLS. I attended the Graham and Parks School for elementary school and the Vassal Lane Upper School for middle school. This past summer I had so much fun working on the guide with Paul Sullivan and Ms. Lozada. I'm excited to see the Class of 2020 crush it at Rindge! Go in with an open, kind mind and do not be afraid to take advantage of all that Rindge has to offer. Freshman year is a great time to explore your interests and find your "thing"! So far, my things at CRLS have been: the acapella group, Sassafra, theatre (classes and productions), Club 4 (volunteering at Cambridge homeless shelters) and Glocal (a competition to take a global issue and solve it locally). Outside of school, I dance at the Deborah Mason School of Dance and do theatre in the Boston area. These next years in highschool are for you to grow and learn in so do you and go for it!

CONTRIBUTOR BIOS

Hi freshman! I'm **Grace Austin** and I went to Vassal Lane Upper School for middle school and Graham and Parks for elementary school. In terms of sports, I mainly dive and play lacrosse. I started doing both of these sports through school teams but now also do them outside of school as well. For clubs, I participate in Student Government, Model UN, Glocal, and Marine Conservation Club. I have also done Club 4 for volunteer work at a homeless shelter. Another good volunteer opportunity you can do through the school is Charles River Clean Up. My favorite class this year was Geometry because it is a cool subject and there are a lot of projects related to art which are fun to do in a math class. My favorite memories from this year are going to a bunch of sporting events for our school. It is awesome to see everybody coming together and the games are fun. Definitely try to go to as many sports games or school-wide events as possible. Get pumped for freshman year and if you have any questions feel free to ask!



Hi! I'm **Megumi Kirby** and I'm a member of the Class of 2019. Before coming to Rindge, I attended Shady Hill School. I dance at the Deborah Mason School of Dance and also run on the Track team. I am a member of *Sassafras*, one of the CRLS a capella groups, and I recently started attending the Charles River Cleanups. I really enjoyed the classes I took Freshman year, but Physics and World History stand out because my teachers (Ms. Hansel and Ms. Otty) were especially supportive and helpful. My favorite memories from freshman year were playing physics games every Friday in Ms. Hansel's class (they're more fun than they sound) and eating lunch outside with my friends when the weather was nice. I encourage all future students to seize the opportunities Rindge has to offer, and I wish you the best in your first year of highschool!



Hello! My name is **Alexander Sadock** and I am a rising sophomore at CRLS. I attended the King Open School and then the Cambridge Street Upper School. I really enjoy taking photos, reading, and playing sports. I am a member of the CRLS golf, hockey, and tennis teams. I also participate in clubs such as Sisters on the Runway and Falcon Friends. My favorite moment from my freshmen year was attending the CRLS basketball championship. At the game, my friends and I had a blast cheering on our classmates as they won the state championship. GO FALCONS! My favorite class this past year was Physics. I particularly enjoyed the class because I was able to test and make sense of the physics that takes place in the world around me. I really loved building a mini pool table, that was equipped with lights and a buzzer, in order to see how circuits and electricity flow. My biggest piece of advice to all of you is to attend school events and sports games to meet new people and get the full CRLS experience.

Hey Guys, my name is **Rafael Salas** and I am part of the class of 2019. I attended Fletcher Maynard Academy and then Cambridge Street Upper School. I am part of Student Government and on the Freshman Football team. And this year, I'm hoping to get more involved in the Minority Student Achievement Network. Within the Cambridge Community, I have been involved in the Teen Media Program and Workforce. My favorite classes this year were English with Ms. Turick and Drama 1 with Mr. Cramp because they were both really interesting classes. My favorite memory is when our Freshman Football team finally won at least one game and that was the last game of the season. It felt like a relief to finally win a game, but it also gave us a sense to step up our game for this year. For incoming freshmen, always be confident in your work and your passions. Take advantage of the opportunities at CRLS and plan the path of your four years here. Challenge yourself and believe in whatever you do!



Hello Freshman! My name is **Sophie Wright** and I came from the Vassal Lane Upper School. I am now a sophomore at CRLS. As a freshman I participated in many new activities that I hadn't been open to before. First off, I joined the CRLS Track and Field team. Another activity that I took part in was Glocal Challenge. Glocal is a project where students are given the opportunity to research and find an innovative solution to problems occurring in our world. Taking part in this project was a highlight of my year because I was able to work with my friends in a group and have fun while doing it. My favorite course this past year was English because it also gave me a challenge. I recommend beginning the year with an open mind and trying out new activities that interest you. I wish you all good luck in your first year at CRLS!



FRESHMAN GUIDE ALUMNI STILL AT CRLS!



• **Grace Austin ('19)**



• **Alia Campbell ('17)**



• **Reggie Dessources ('18)**



• **Emiliano Durran ('17)**



• **Jeynaba Jamanka ('18)**



• **Megumi Kirby ('19)**



• **Diego Lasarte ('17)**



• **Kester Messan-Hilla ('17)**



• **Alex Sadock ('19)**

• **Rafael Salas ('19)**

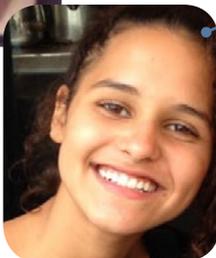


• **Alex Stewart ('17)**

• **Paul Sullivan ('18)**



• **Caroline Workman ('18)**



• **Sophie Wright ('19)**



Above are students still at Rindge who have contributed to the Guide in the past.
Do not hesitate to say hello and talk to any of them!

MEET THE FORMER EDITORS

Ben Rosand graduated in 2016 and is currently at Yale University. He is trying to decide on a major and is continuing to pursue his passion for tennis and rock climbing.



Isabelle Stephen graduated in 2015 and is a sophomore at McGill University in Canada.

Sula Malina graduated in 2013 and...

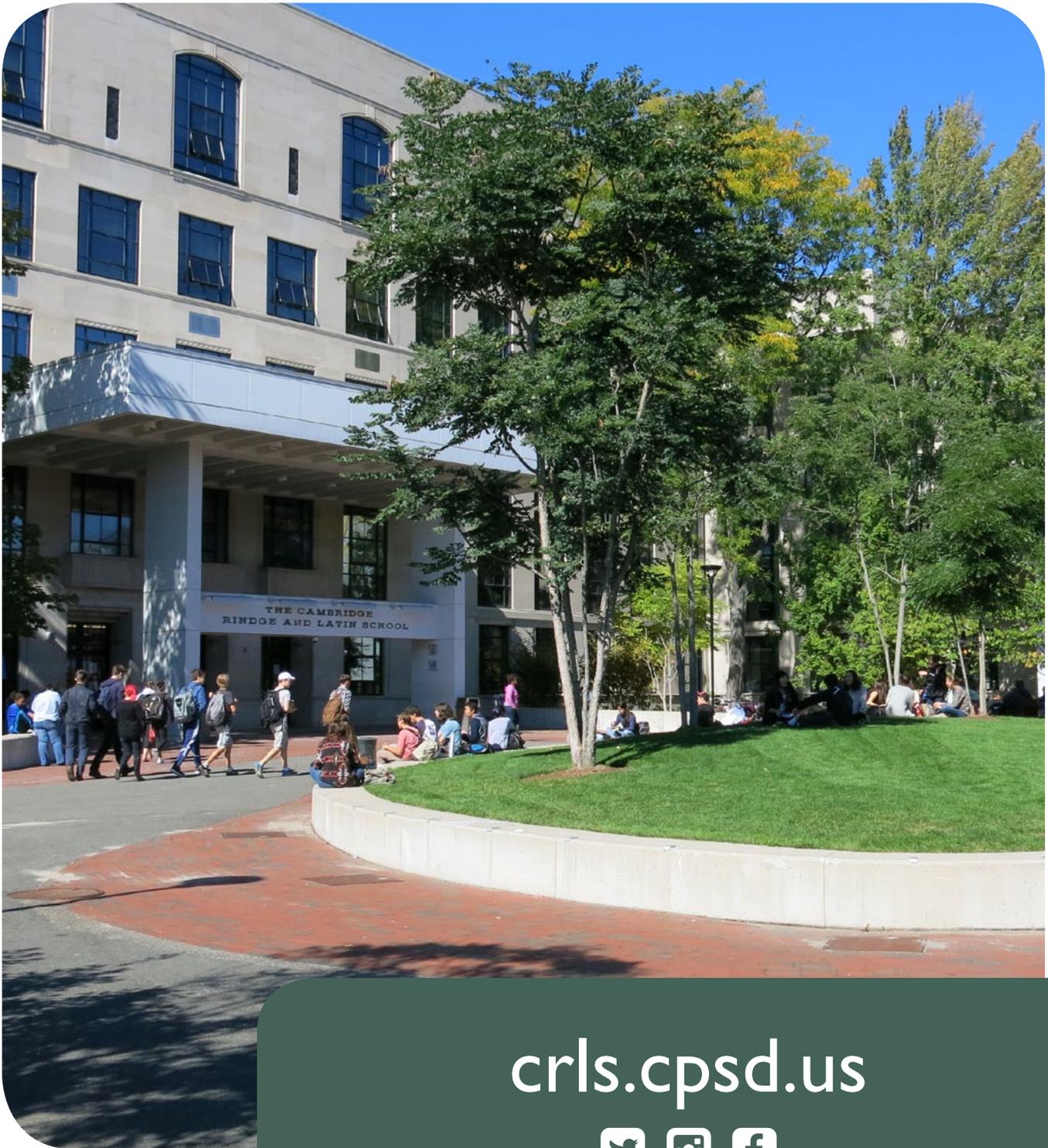
Lucy Flamm graduated in 2011 and...

Isabelle Fisher took over the Guide for one year before moving with her family to San Francisco. She graduated from Columbia University in 2014, lives in Brooklyn, and does consulting for McKinsey & Co.

Zoe Guastella started the Freshman Guide in 2006 to help incoming freshmen feel welcomed and learn the ropes during their critical first eight weeks of school. She graduated as a Posse Scholar from Bryn Mawr College in 2013 and does Global Advertising Sales for a tech start-up in NYC. [Listen to Zoe right here!](#)



We would like to give a huge shout out to Zoe Guastella who came up with the idea for the Freshman Guide 10 years ago and turned it into a reality. She saw the need for a source of advice by freshman for freshman so students could get the real deal about high school and how to make the most of their freshman year and CRLS experience. Here's to you Zoe and the awesome legacy you have left behind for all of us to carry on. And here's to all of you editors and contributors who have put in your energy and time to help smooth the transition for all of our incoming freshmen over the years!



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