



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Halloween Trivia Night
October 26 @ 5-7 pm, 6th Floor

Halloween PTA Bake Sale
Wednesday 10/31

Middle School Picture Day
Nov 1st 6-8th grade

High School Picture Day
Nov 2nd 9-11th grade

Nov 6- No School
Election Day

Nov 12- No School
Veterans Day

Parent –Teacher Conferences
11/28 Middle School 5- 8:00 p.m.
11/29 High School 5-8:00 p.m.
11/30 MS/HS 12:30-2:30 p.m.

CSS Blood Drive
Dec 10th 6th floor

FALL COLLEGE OFFICE EVENTS

Sophomore College Trip
Manhattanville College
Tuesday, 10/23/18

Junior College Trip
Union College & SUNY Albany
Wednesday, 10/24/18

Alumni Staff Reunion
Thursday, 1/3/19
6th Floor, 3:30 - 5 p.m.

Junior College Night, Part 2
Wednesday, 2/27/19 @ Auditorium

Career Day
Friday, 3/8/19, morning

Senior Transition Day
Monday, 6/3/19 @ 6th Floor

Questions/info:
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CSS Welcomes New Faculty

AMANDA FLETCHER- Spanish Teacher I first fell in love with Spanish during high school in Indiana. I continued my language studies at DePauw University for my undergraduate degree and have also studied in San Luis Potosi, Mexico and Salamanca, Spain. I have a Master’s Degree in Spanish and Latin American Literature from Hunter College. After teaching Spanish language, history, and culture in NYC for over ten years, I am very pleased to join the staff here at CSS!

SYEDA JANNAT. ELA I am currently teaching 12th Grade English and Philosophy. With the support of my staff, I have full faith that I will help the students to become successful and confident in their writing. I am a mother of two beautiful daughters who have taught me the beauty of being a mother. I want my students to be able to become comfortable and confident with their writing and even speaking skills. I hope that they will love the art of reading and writing.

SIMONA AUERBACH. Art Teacher My purpose, as an art educator, is to provide empowerment through knowledge and to create a collaborative and inspiring experience together with students. Creating a trusting and positive environment is the basis of every art lesson I plan. As an educator, I will strive to include different viewpoints and different cultures and backgrounds in my teaching methods and lessons. It is important for students to appreciate our differences and values, and the underlying similarities between us. I will help students to make meaningful connections.

YESENIA PAREDES-DIAZ. Assistant Principal It is my honor to become a member of the Columbia Secondary School as your new Assistant Principal. As an educator with over 18 years of learning, teaching, coaching and leadership experience, I am committed to the values that make CSS the gem of District Five. I believe students learn best when all the systems around them speak to their academic journey and when they feel valued and recognized in their learning environment. CSS embodies the values I hold dear, and I am committed to making sure we continue to provide all students with valuable learning experiences that will translate to successful college careers. One of my areas of focus this year will be Spanish Language Instruction at CSS. I am looking forward to working closely with the Spanish department to ensure CSS continues its long history integrating Spanish language and culture into our community. As one of our first initiatives, students across language classes in the school are tasked with having purposeful conversations outside of class during the month of October and throughout the year. Don’t be surprised if your child pulls you into one of his/her required interactions. Brush up your Spanish! I look forward to building long-lasting relationships with all of the members of our community. I have witnessed the great sense of pride that exists among the faculty, students and parents at CSS and I am truly impressed by the commitment of the members of our community. As a mother, I am constantly reminding my daughters of the importance of education, of building community, and of offering others kindness and respect. I am committed to making sure we continue in this path of excellence at CSS. Looking forward to a great year.

College Office welcomes staff, interns and student ambassadors; launches fall activities

Molly Porcher, leave replacement for Kiri Patel, has joined Andi Velasquez in room 413 for the school year. Interns Anna Kwiatkowska (Hunter College School of Education), Ashley Saephan and Yiran Gao (both at Teacher’s College) are also assisting with all college office activities. Welcoming over 70 college admissions reps visiting CSS this fall are eleven college office student ambassadors, pictured at right.



Left to right front row: Kevin Guimaraes, Catherine Parkin, Niagale Fofana, Kiana Turner; back row: Eunice Ledres, Naomi Piña, Wareena Johnson, Nicole Cordero, Daniel Martinez. Not pictured: Jarlenys Mendez and Anell Ramos.

The college office has moved key junior events from spring to fall, including junior college night and the junior college trip. It’s also introducing sophomore events. See box at left.



Advising, Mentoring, and Supporting

How CSS Programs and Partnerships Support Socioemotional Development of our Students

In addition to building a strong foundational academic curriculum for our students, CSS is also dedicated to creating opportunities for students' socioemotional development – and we are pleased to report on some updates to our advisory programs for students in both middle and high school.

In middle school, we have made a significant shift in students' programs to build advisory opportunities back into the school day for 6th and 7th graders. Specifically, 6th graders work in advisory groups of 16 students alongside advisors including both CSS faculty and SONYC staff for an extended 8th-9th period session on Tuesdays. These sessions include team building, academic advisement, and activities for students to consider social issues like friendship, bullying, cyber safety, and goal setting. In the spring, 6th grade advisory also includes STAR Theatre Program, which provides age-appropriate health and sex education through theatre. Seventh graders take part in an "Academic Advisory" during their Thursday 8th period, during which they work with both CSS advisors to support academic needs as well as SONYC staff who will be bringing in bi-weekly lessons for our College Access for All partnership. The College Access programming is aimed at aligning students' passions and interests to possible career goals and opening their eyes to the various possibilities for their educational futures. While eighth graders do not have a scheduled advisory this year, they do have the new addition to their schedule of an 8th period elective course on Wednesdays, which kick off this week and allows all 8th graders to extend their academic interests: Digital Art, Fantasy and Science Fiction in Literature and Film, SolidWorks Engineering, and Physical Fitness.

In high school, we are excited to be initiating our LEAD Mentoring Program. LEAD - standing for Leadership, Environment, Action, and Discovery - kicked off last spring with Junior and senior mentors who underwent an intensive leadership training, culminating in a 3-day backpacking and camping trip upstate this August led by Assistant Principal Hill and Prof. Kornely (see trip photo below!). This fall, LEAD mentors helped to kick off the school year through school beautification service projects, help welcoming and handing out schedules to students, and welcoming events for freshmen and students new to CSS. After a recent orientation for freshmen, LEAD mentors will be working in "Crews" of 4-5 freshmen and 2-3 Junior/Senior mentors to carry out community action projects united around specific themes. Projects currently include: Watershed Health and Boatbuilding, Art & Social Justice, Athletics in our Community, and Food Access & Gardening. Our goal is to build freshmen engagement within the high school and greater school community, while connecting them to the power of taking action in the world outside of school. We plan to incorporate significant outdoor experiences for students, including hiking trips and service trips. The LEAD program is a collaboration among AP Hill, Prof. Kornely, and Katie Ringel, the director of the high school COMPASS program through the YM & YWHA of Washington Heights and Inwood, which offers programmatic supports and funding for high school after school activities. Parents interested in being involved in these activities, we'd love to have you!

The rest of the high school has opportunities to support their development, too. In the 10th grade, COMPASS offers opportunities for students to engage in job and career explorations, beginning this fall with a Con Edison job shadowing program and a workshop series on building resumes and finding a strong employment fit, for now or in the future. Our juniors and seniors work closely with our College Counselors. Seniors are enrolled in College Readiness sessions once a week led by Counselors Andi Velasquez and Molly Porcher, and juniors will be engaged in College Clubs in the spring semester during period 9. A cohort of 25 juniors are also gaining early support through Youth Career Connect (YCC), which engages them in college and career readiness workshops and job shadowing opportunities, as well as possibilities for paid summer internships.

In addition to these opportunities, our Guidance Counselors are busy as ever, providing counseling for students on both academic and social needs. Students should be reminded that they always have a safe space for support in room 313 with Counselors Engleman (MS) and Cordoba (HS). We are thrilled that we can support our students' development throughout the stages of their middle and high school lives through these opportunities!

