

October 15, 2021

When Chioma began this new school year in August of 2021, it was the first time she had been in school since March of 2020. She is a sophomore at Cristo Rey, but she "... feels more like a freshman."

More than half of our students are experiencing school on the campus at Cristo Rey for the first time this year. All of us are learning to do school over again. But it's not the same as before. We are building a new normal at Cristo Rey.

Part of our new normal are revisions to our curriculum. Over the summer, our faculty conducted a thorough and honest assessment of the learning losses that our students suffered because of virtual and hybrid school. The assessment clearly showed that learning losses were substantial and that a genuine program of recovery required a deliberate and carefully planned effort – not a quick fix.

The math curriculum is a good example. A traditional math curriculum is a sequence of disciplines that build upon themselves each year. For example, tenth graders taking geometry are expected to have learned basic algebra in the ninth grade. If they didn't learn basic algebra in the ninth grade, then the traditional tenth grade math curriculum won't work. If that problem is ignored, the students will fall even farther behind, and they will almost certainly learn to hate math!

This was not only a big problem, but a completely new problem and also an urgent problem because we needed a solution that was ready for deployment in August.

Our entire math department worked together over the summer with secondary education experts from Villanova, West Chester and Temple Universities to develop a revised math curriculum which we launched in August. Basically, the team rationalized and modernized the traditional math benchmarks and re-sequenced them into an integrated four-year curriculum that emphasizes the connection between math concepts and real-world problem solving.



Our new normal isn't just about academic recovery. A bigger and more critical challenge is to recognize and address the social and emotional trauma that our community endured during the shutdown. We needed to recreate an environment in our community that enabled social and emotional growth – for everyone. We needed to ensure a safe environment in the school. We needed to provide experiences that reaffirmed the roots of our Cristo Rey culture: care and support for the wellbeing of each other. We needed to remind our entire community of our mission and the pillars of our way of proceeding: *we believe, we dream, we lead, we*



serve.

When I asked Chioma why she chose Cristo Rey two years ago, she remembered her first visit to the school. When she arrived for her interview at 7PM, the Family Room was still crowded with students. Some were singing around the piano. Most were just “chillin” and enjoying each other’s company. She wanted to be a part of that family!

Chioma, 10th Grade

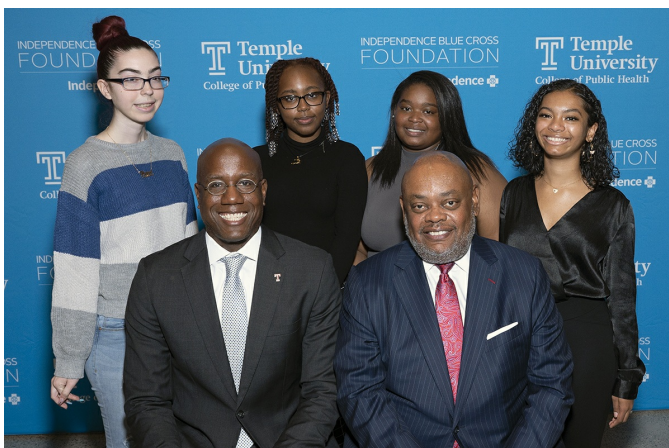
Much has changed at Cristo Rey, but thankfully, some of our best “normal” has remained the same.

Sincerely,

John McConnell
Founder and President

HIGHLIGHTS

Alumni Receive Scholarships to Pursue Nursing



Cristo Rey alumni SaKeesha, Jamirah and Justine (CRPHS '21) were awarded full scholarships to pursue Nursing at Temple University through Independence Blue Cross Foundation’s new Healthcare Scholars Pipeline Program. [Read the full article and interview with our alumni here.](#)

Cristo Rey Students are Featured by BLOCS

Business Leadership Organized for Catholic Schools (BLOCS) interviewed recent graduates

Nafeese and Jocelyn on their Cristo Rey experience. Click below to watch.

Thank you BLOCS and our tax credit donors who provide scholarships to Cristo Rey students through the Opportunity Scholarship Tax Credit Program!



Meet the Class of 2025

We're thrilled to have these amazing 9th graders join the Blue Pride Community!



