Happy New Year! Now that we are back from the holidays, our winter sport season is in full swing! We have 186 students representing Cranbrook in interscholastic athletics competition this season in the sports of basketball, figure skating, ski and swim and dive. We wish our teams great success! Here is a brief introduction to the varsity teams season.

**Head Coach Matt Fortescue (2nd season) and the Girls Varsity Basketball Team** welcomes back a significant core of its lineup from last year’s team with the return of senior captain Olivia Bowden and junior captain Jordyn Russell. Returning juniors Kayla Austin, Lana Fadlallah and Charlotte Trunsky are joined by sophomores Ella Bousamra and Adina Alterman. New freshmen members of the team that will be contributing significant minutes are forward Jordan Richie and guard Annabel Brown. Junior varsity numbers are stronger than they have been in years which bodes well for the strength and future of the girls basketball program.

Early in the season, Cranbrook’s Brookside Dads Club brought some of our future Cranes from Brookside to provide wonderful energy and team support! It was a great night!
Head Coach Shane Finney (17th season) and the Boys Varsity Basketball Team is excited about the upcoming season. The Cranes return six letter winners and will be led by junior point guard Cam Garner. Seniors Sam Hauxwell and Jordan Roebuck will be relied upon for scoring and fellow senior Jack Fairman will bring toughness and grit to the Cranes. CK is the two-time defending CHSL Division Champions and look forward to defending the title again this year. Juniors Graeme Gump and Bryce Hall will be called upon for depth and toughness and the team welcomes freshman guard Evan Evans and freshman forward John Kersh to the squad to provide youth and depth to this year’s squad.

The Cranes had a strong showing at the championships of the 4th Annual Metro Conference Reunion Winter Holiday Tournament and won the Hoopz for Hope Showcase during the winter break.

Head Coach Laura Lepzinski (7th season) and the Figure Skating Team are led by senior captains Rachael Kong and Grace Trudeau and junior captain Isabel Jacobson. The Team competes in a Co-op with skaters from Marian and Detroit Country Day and welcomes back returning CK skaters junior Julia Frykman, sophomores Lara Seledotis, Alexandra Miller-Thomas, and Coco Catallo and junior Sofia Valbuena. The skating team also welcomes newcomers freshmen Charles Huang and Kennedy McCarthy to the team. This season, our skaters hope to continue improving our jumps and spins for A and C Teams, while our B Team hopes to excel and qualify for the State Championships in March.
Head Coach Alexis Bohlinger (4th season) and the CK Girls Varsity Hockey Team has started off the season strong with a league record of 3-1-1. The Cranes team is comprised of 19 players (4 seniors, 4 juniors, 6 sophomores and 5 freshmen). The Cranes have a very strong defensive core and one of the strongest goaltenders in the League in junior Paige Gorman. Senior captains Meg Brice, Robin Goldman and Kendall McMurray will lead the hockey team that is quickly improving their passing and playmaking, and showing the qualities of a strong playoff contender.

Cranbrook welcomes our new Head Varsity Boys Hockey Coach John LaFontaine to the program. Coach LaFontaine replaces Cranbrook’s longstanding Hall of Fame coach Andy Weidenbach who retired last spring after 26 years of service. Coach LaFontaine brings a wealth of experience to the program as a coach in the USHL, NAHL, Shattuck St Mary’s, and at Lake Superior State University, and as a player for Miami University, the OHL and WHL.

Coach John LaFontaine and the CK Boys Varsity Hockey Team will be led by senior captains Eddie Agamov, Bryce Truby, Noah Goldberger and Dan Juzych. The remaining returners from last year’s team includes: juniors Ronan McLaughlin and Alex Ceritano, and sophomores Michael Brown and Max Bergen. The team’s depth at defense has been bolstered with newcomers junior Leyton Stenman and sophomore Owen Dyer. Up front, juniors Jack Wineman and Lucas Hunter moved up from our JV program and are off to very strong starts. Noah Goldberger will be called on early at goalie to help our young team through some early season bumps.

The coaching staff also welcomes Brian Felsner to the program. Coach Felsner was a standout at Lake Superior State then went on to skate professionally for the Orlando Solar Bears of the IHL; the Chicago Blackhawks of the NHL; the Milwaukee Admirals Indianapolis Ice, Detroit Vipers, Houston Aeros, and Cincinnati Cyclones of the IHL; as well as multiple professional teams overseas. His playing experience at the highest levels as well as his successful coaching career have made him a valuable addition to the program.
Head Coach Heather Brennan (2nd season) and the CK Girls and Boys Ski Teams have begun their race season and have been on snow since the first week of December. The Girls team looks very promising with a full Varsity and JV team this season. The Boys are rebuilding but working very hard. The ski team has also been working hard in the weight room conditioning for the season and a large amount of the team participated in the Win Alpine Race Camp over Thanksgiving break. The Team is led by veteran captains Grace Aikens, Kelsey Kowal, Mallory Brophy and Calvi Teste.

Head Coach Karl Hodgson (6th season) and the Boys Varsity Swim and Dive Team is off to a strong start with a 1-2 record in dual meets, with several MHSAA Division 3 state cuts, and is ranked in the top 4 of Division 3 teams heading into the season. Four-time Cranbrook State Champion, Coach Karl Hodgson, returns as Head Coach to lead the Cranes in the this season after taking a year off. The Cranes are led by seniors Joe Kosman, Nick Ludwig, Trey O’Hara, Guy Press, and Jerome Wiater. Returning state qualifiers include, Jerome Wiater, Nick Ludwig, James Wiater, Ben Angileri, Andrew Zhang, and Hans Machus. The team hopes not only to improve this year but to have a breakout year with some tremendous underclassmen talent.

The athletic department also welcomes new Assistant Coach Greg Palmer to the program. Coach Palmer brings 25 years of coaching experience at Detroit Golf Club, Birmingham Blue Dolphins, and in the Waterford School District.