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*“Our five **Learner Expectations** are that our student will be: *Researchers, Empathetic Citizens, Collaborators, Problem Solvers, and Communicators.*”*

Dear Parents,

Welcome to the beginning of the 2012-2013 school year. Each year, changes in programming have been made in order to improve. This year, Capital Preparatory Magnet School (CPMS) is changing the manner in which its students are assessed and graded. CPMS will no longer grade students on a traditional 100 point scale and instead will switch to Standards Based Grading.

The Federal Government has collaborated with several states to identify skills that students in each grade and discipline should have before the end of the school year. The skills have been collected and compiled in a document called the Common Core.

Teachers have already identified the strands and skills for each marking period that your child(ren) will be assessed in. Students will receive scores ranging from 0-4. The charts below provide an outline for what the scores your child will be receiving mean.

4	Advanced	.Make in-depth inferences and applications that go beyond what is taught
3	Mastered	Demonstrates thorough understanding of the concepts and associated skills and processes
2	Proficient	Demonstrates understanding regarding the simpler details and processes but major errors or omissions regarding the more complex ideas and processes
1	Emerging	With help, a partial understanding of some of the simpler details and processes and some of the more complex ideas and processes

Each standard will receive a final marking period grade that is an average of the last four assessments of that skill. Students are expected to earn a grade of 3 or higher in pre-identified “Power Standards” in order to be promoted. Each department is identifying what they are for each

Students will have multiple opportunities to demonstrate solid understanding of a particular standard and skill. In order to promote comprehension and understanding, students will be given opportunities to re-take assessments. The process for doing so will be provided to students in each class and requires students to correct their work, meet with their teacher to demonstrate the skill has been attained or to ask for help in acquiring and then to take a similar assessment. Re-takes must be done before the last week of the marking period and are available to all students who follow the protocols outlined in each teacher’s syllabus.

One of the most significant changes standards based grading will have on students is its effect on the role of homework in relation to a student’s grade. Homework grades and completion will not be used to calculate grades for specific standards. Research has shown that the varying weight that teachers apply to homework is not consistent in reporting what students know and can do. While all homework assignments may not “count” towards final grades, some homework assignments will be assessments and therefore may count towards determining standard grades. Whether “counting” or not, all homework should be completed since it is practice for the student and a measuring tool for the teacher.

Homework and other academic skills such as preparedness and attendance will still be reported on using the rubric below. However, they will not have any impact on standard grades.

Habits of learning topic/skill is graded individually according to the following rubric:

0	No judgement can be made; No effort made; Off-task 100% of time
1	Student refuses to engage in classroom activities; Student “gives up” easily or frequently
2	Student participates in classroom activities/assignments only when explicitly required to do so; Student does not seek help from instructor or peers, does not utilize outside resources
3	Student participates in classroom activities/assignments when asked; Student seeks support when necessary, but is not 100% self-directed
4	Student participates in classroom activities/assignments without being asked; Student utilizes a variety of supports and pushes themselves to improve

This change in grading is one of the most significant CPMS has ever undertaken. If you do not feel you or your child fully understands what is being assessed or asked of them, please reach out to the teacher to immediately begin a conversation. Standards based reporting is designed to help students, parents and teachers know more specifically where individual strengths and weaknesses lie for each child. When that is not happening, it is imperative that we find out how to improve communication.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 860-695-9804 or at begar001@hartfordschools.org.

Have a great year!



Richard C. Beganski Jr.