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September 30, 2014

Dear students, parents, and guardians,

Although it feels to many of us like the school year just started, we are officially $\frac{1}{8}$ of the way through it. Hard to believe, I know. We pride ourselves on keeping you updated on your child's progress. Advisors, as you likely know, are required to communicate with families frequently. When students are not performing well, we require even more regular outreach so you know what is going on and what can be done to help turn things around. This communication is critically important and I thank you for all of the ways that you contribute to the success of your child -- from simply helping students wake up and arrive on time to checking homework assignments and grades to calling and emailing staff here at CCSC.

Enclosed with this letter is your child's first progress report of the 2014-2015 school year. It provides a very useful snapshot of how your child is doing in his or her classes. Which classes are proving to be a struggle? What are the areas of strength right now? Please find some time to sit with your child and really review it, class by class. Pay attention to the information on the bottom of the report -- is your child in danger of failing any course? Who can you contact with questions about the grades, and how?

MCAS results were officially released last week. Your child's results are included in this mailing as well. CCSC has once again performed very, very well. Our growth numbers across all grades are strong, with some of the averages placing us in very select company statewide. As has been the case for years now, our 10th grade students, who must pass the MCAS in order to be eligible to graduate, excelled. 98% scored a Proficient or Advanced on the ELA exam and 97% did the same on the math portion. Of all the public (not just charter) combined middle and high schools in the state of Massachusetts, CCSC's overall performance rank, determined by the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education using a complicated formula with many factors, was second statewide. This overall percentile ranking was the highest of any Boston-area district or charter middle/high school. Ultimately, these scores serve to validate all of our efforts -- yours as parents, ours as educators, and of course your child's, too. We celebrated these results as a school this past Friday, formally recognizing those students whose achievement grew the most compared with their peers statewide. And we also reminded students, as we do every year, that MCAS results, while important, are merely an important step on the path towards graduation and post-secondary success.

A huge thank-you to all of you able to attend Back to School Night last week. I hope you got to put some faces to names and meet your child's teachers. It is an important night for our community and the turnout was strong.



Please take some time to review the important information below:

- CCSC students need healthy meals in order to learn. As a school, we are committed to offering healthy options daily. Breakfast costs \$1.25 and lunch costs \$3.00. *Your children may qualify for free meals or for reduced price meals. Reduced price is \$0.30 for breakfast and \$0.40 for lunch.* If you have not received a Notice of Direct Certification for free meals, you must complete the Free and Reduced Price Meals Household Application for this school year to apply for a discount. Many families qualify, including those receiving Massachusetts SNAP, TAFDC. We want all school meals to be accessible and affordable, so contact us and we will help in any way that we are able.
- Our efforts to recruit students for the 2015-16 school year have begun. On Thursday, November 13th from 6 to 8 pm, we will hold our first open house for the families interested in enrolling their children at CCSC next year. Please tell your friends and neighbors! Siblings and Cambridge residents have priority, but others will have a better chance of getting a seat if they apply to the first lottery cycle. Our 2015-16 application is ready to submit. You can pick up a copy from Ms. Swanson at the Bent Building reception desk or download one from our website. The deadline for the first lottery is January 14th at 4 pm.
- Benchmark exams are coming up on October 22nd, 23rd, and 24th. There will be a special schedule during each of these three days, with limited bus services for students on these days. Most students will be dismissed at 2pm on the 22nd and 23rd and at 11:30am on the 24th, unless they have a make-up exam in the afternoon. We will hold detention each day.

Thanks, as always, for taking the time to review this letter and the contents of this mailing. As you already know, an outside team will be coming to visit for three days in October. This is part of the 5-year charter renewal process. For students, it will be business as usual. They are used to visitors. We are, too. We are ready for them and excited to show off our school community to them.

Sincerely,
 Caleb Hurst-Hiller
 Head of School