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December 9, 2015

Dear Students, Parents, and Guardians,

Happy (almost) holiday vacation, everyone. We just passed the midpoint of our second quarter. When we return from vacation, we will have a few weeks until midterm exams and the end of our first semester. The fall, it seems, has flown by. I hope the Thanksgiving break was a welcome rest. We have pushed extremely hard through the first 15 weeks of our year together. This stretch is often when the most focused and uninterrupted learning occurs. Students, faculty, and staff have worked diligently and made real progress. And I am proud of how we have positioned ourself for 2016 and the rest of this year together.

Today, the Department of Education made CCSC's accountability data public. The accountability *report card* will be sent home soon, but we have included the accountability *report* in this mailing. It provides a snapshot of how CCSC did last year and the school's current rating. **CCSC has the highest rating possible statewide as a Level 1 school. The school's overall percentile rank of 83 is among the highest in the entire state of Massachusetts for our school type, a combined middle/high school. And, CCSC has received an official commendation for high progress. Only 44 schools statewide received such an honor (and only five charter schools). CCSC was the *only* combined middle/high school. CCSC was one of five schools commended serving high school students and one of four commended serving middle school students. This is an amazing recognition of our hard work. Congratulations are deserved by all -- students, faculty, staff, and our parents/guardians.**

We recently were made aware that CCSC was one of three charter schools selected (of the nearly 80 statewide) that have been invited to apply for the Pozen Prize, which is given annually by the Boston Foundation. To be invited to apply is a real honor. In order to be eligible, schools had to demonstrate three years of incredibly strong academic results --in the aggregate and for important subgroups, like our English Language Learners and students with disabilities. I have no idea if we will win (we certainly hope so!), but simply being recognized as a finalist is wonderful news and I wanted to share that with you all in this letter.

On a more sobering note, it has been a trying few weeks. The repeated threats have been disturbing. They force our minds to think about worst case scenarios. It has all been upsetting, to say the least. As I have tried to communicate via our emails and calls, we are actively collaborating with local authorities and taking extra precautions. We will continue to do so. Please do not hesitate to reach out with your concerns or your questions.

This mailing includes several important pieces, to which I want to call your attention:

- **PARCC scores from 2014-2015:** If your child took the PARCC exam as a 6th, 7th, or 8th grade student last spring at CCSC, his/her results are included in this mailing. As noted in the previous letter, CCSC performed very well overall in both mathematics and English Language Arts.
- **2015-2016 CCSC Calendar:** As a gift to you and your family, we have for the first time, created a calendar that highlights many of the key aspects of our programs. We also use this calendar as an opportunity to thank our donors, many of whom are parents or guardians. You will receive this in the mail, along with our latest newsletter, before the break.
- **Open Houses and Lotteries for the 2016-2017 school year:** We are accepting applications and are always appreciative of your help in spreading the word about CCSC! Share the good news above and encourage family and friends to apply. Open House events are happening next week and in early 2016. The first lottery is in January.
- **Highly Qualified Status of CCSC faculty:** CCSC receives Title I funds under the federal "No Child Left Behind Act." Due to this, CCSC has a requirement to inform you, as a parent of a child attending a Title I school, of information regarding the professional qualifications of your child's classroom teacher(s). Some CCSC teachers are not, under the definition of the No Child Left Behind legislation, "highly qualified." In order to meet the highly qualified requirement, Massachusetts charter school teachers who teach core academic subjects do not need a Massachusetts license, but must hold a Bachelor's degree and demonstrate competence in the subject area in which they teach within the first year of employment in their role. CCSC tracks faculty status closely. *However, most importantly, and as many of you already know from experience, CCSC teachers are exceptionally talented and hard-working educators. The number of applications per open faculty position often numbers in the hundreds. I have nothing less than full confidence in their ability to teach effectively in their current assignments.* Attached is a document showing which CCSC teachers are not HQ in specific courses they are currently teaching. Should you have questions regarding qualifications, please contact Monica Tecca, administrative services and enrollment manager, at ext 202.

Our winter seasons are underway. Most Friday nights, we'll be cheering the varsity teams on at MIT. It's a wonderfully spirited scene and I hope you can come out and join our community as we encourage and celebrate our scholar-athletes and dedicated coaches, as well as the members of our growing dance team and cheerleading squad, all of whom have been practicing hard and are excited to represent CCSC well. Thanks for reading, as always. And Happy holidays to all.

Sincerely,



Caleb Hurst-Hiller  
Head of School