

September 2011

Dear CMS Parent or Guardian,

We are excited to announce that we will be implementing a new grading system for the 2011-12 school year. The new grading system was built on the foundation of the following beliefs:

- *The primary goal of grading and reporting is communication about student learning and growth.*
- *Reporting of student learning and growth must be consistent throughout departments and the building.*
- *Evaluation of student learning and growth should be based on high quality evidence collected over time.*
- *Priority should be given to the most recent and most comprehensive evidence of student learning. (Traditional uses of percentages and averaging are in conflict with this guiding belief.)*
- *Progress toward identified Power Standards and development of Life Skills are both important; each should be considered and reported independently.*

We believe that our new grading policy reflects these beliefs and is an improvement over past practices. Our Report Card will be used to report at the end of each semester using a 0-4 numeric grading scale for each Power Standard that will enable the teacher to depict your child's progress toward achievement of the grade level expectations.

This numeric scale depicts both learning and growth, and it is the biggest change. Typically, a student will receive a "1" at the end of first trimester, indicating that he or she is just beginning to master the content. A score of "2" at the end of second trimester would tell you that your child is progressing as expected, and a "3" at the end of third trimester would show that your child has achieved the grade level expectation. Some students may demonstrate early learning and receive a "3" first trimester, while others will demonstrate learning above and beyond the grade level expectation and receive a "4".

In order to be an informed and knowledgeable parent, we ask that you access the following supports especially designed for parents to help you learn more about the new grading practices it depicts:

- *A Frequently Asked Question Document (Included in this mailing)*
- *Scale Example*
- *Life Skills Scale Grid*

Should you have additional questions, please contact your child's teacher, or myself. We look forward to sharing the "new and improved" grading system with you and your child in an upcoming informational meeting in October and working together to help Charlotte Middle School students learn today and lead tomorrow.

Educationally,

Wayne Brown
Principal