

# CHARLESTON

## Community Unit School District

District Administration Office • [www.charleston.k12.il.us](http://www.charleston.k12.il.us)

Phone: (217) 639-1000 410 West Polk Avenue, Charleston, IL 61920

Fax: (217) 639-1005

Dear Parents,

I am excited to share with you that your child is in a Competency Based "Pilot" Classroom. Don't worry! That doesn't mean it's an "experiment" or that it's "new" standards. The teachers are still following district curricula and your child will still learn what other students in the same grade will be learning...AND MORE! Being in a "pilot" classroom means that your child's teacher has volunteered to be a leader for the Charleston School District. He/She will develop competency based practices throughout the year, with plenty of support.

I have prepared some *information* to share with you (attached), to help you better understand what this means, what the benefits are, and what you and your child can expect. Please read and reflect on this information. I'd be happy to answer any questions you may have. You may not recognize any difference in your child's classroom at all, especially not right away.

CUSD1, like many other districts across the country, is transitioning away from "seat time" or traditional time-based education. Competency Based Learning will provide opportunities and increased flexibility for our students. Allowing students to progress as they demonstrate mastery of both academic content and personal skills will mean that our students should be fully prepared for success in life after high school.

24 teachers in Grades K-12 are participating in this Competency Based Education "pilot program". These teachers will begin implementing personalized learning into their instructional practices for at least *one subject area*. They will provide leadership and guidance for the rest of the district in the coming years, as we implement Competency Based Education throughout the district. These teachers have participated in summer professional development, including book study and working together to develop plans and materials. The pilot teachers will continue to work together throughout the year, host observers, and visit other schools. I will provide ongoing support for their work every step of the way. Your child's teacher is innovative and passionate about implementing change!

***Learning today...Leading tomorrow***

# CHARLESTON

## *Community Unit School District*

District Administration Office • [www.charleston.k12.il.us](http://www.charleston.k12.il.us)

Phone: (217) 639-1000 410 West Polk Avenue, Charleston, IL 61920

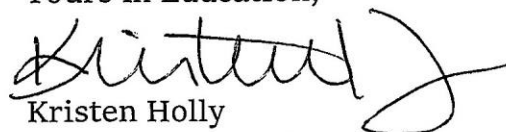
Fax: (217) 639-1005

Some important things I would encourage you to do this year:

- Be patient if routines or communication changes. The teachers are trying new ways to better meet the needs of their students and that might look different as the year goes on.
- Be supportive of their efforts. This is difficult, yet very meaningful and beneficial for your child. They decided to do this because they strongly believe it is best for students. It shows they are committed to their work. Please support them along the way.
- Keep lines of communication open with both the teacher and your child. If concerns or questions arise, please contact them directly to avoid frustration setting in. Talk to your child about their experience and what information they might share about the classroom.
- Get involved. As the year goes on, we will provide you with opportunities to learn more about Competency Based Education. We will host information sessions, ask for your feedback, and seek your involvement in future planning. If you want to learn more, we welcome your participation.
- Continue to be partners in your child's education. One of the major changes with competency based practices is increased student awareness of their academic strengths and needs, student ownership of growth goals, and student independence. These are all important life skills that we will be promoting as the year goes on. Please ask your child about their progress in meeting their learning goals and ways they can show their teacher evidence of learning.

We are so genuinely grateful to work in a community with such supportive families and such innovative teachers. This is truly an exciting initiative that will have significant benefits for Charleston School District students.

Yours in Education,



Kristen Holly  
Asst. Superintendent for Student  
Services

***Learning today...Leading tomorrow***