August 14, 2014

Dear Parents,

As part of the Common Core State Standards initiative, Aztec elementary schools will be implementing a new standards-based report card at Park Avenue during the 2014-15 school year.

The purpose of the new reporting system is to provide parents, teachers and students with more accurate information about students' progress toward meeting the specific content standards in math and English language arts at each grade level. By monitoring the concrete skills and knowledge listed on the report card, we will know whether all students are being exposed to the same curriculum and learning what they should in each grade.

The new system also should help us close the gap in achievement among different groups of students. And, parents will be more aware of what their children should know and be able to do by the end of each grade level.

HOW ARE STANDARDS-BASED REPORT CARDS DIFFERENT FROM TRADITIONAL REPORT CARDS?

Traditional report cards usually assign one grade for reading, one for math and so on. On a standards-based report card, each of these subject areas is divided into a list of skills and knowledge that students are responsible for learning. Rather than a letter grade, students receive a separate mark for each standard. The achievement marks indicate a child’s progress toward meeting specific grade-level standards.
With the new standards-based reporting system, students are evaluated more objectively according to consistent grade-level standards. The letter grades used in traditional report cards are a more subjective reflection of individual teachers’ expectations for student effort and achievement.
 **HOW DOES THE NEW REPORT CARD MEASURE STUDENTS PROGRESS?**The new report card will have a code (see chart below) to indicate a child’s progress toward meeting the end-of-year Common Core State Standards. A blank space on the report card will indicate that the curriculum related to some standards has not yet been taught or assessed.

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| **1** - Not Meeting Standards | Student performance does not demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level. |
| **2** - Nearing Proficiency | Student performance demonstrates a partial understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level. |
| **3** - Proficient | Student performance demonstrates a thorough understanding of the knowledge and skills expected at this grade level. |
| **4** - Advanced | Student performance demonstrates an understanding of the knowledge and skills beyond expectations and consistently shows evidence of higher level thinking.  |

Since this is new to us all, we would like to have a parent information meeting, which will take place at a later date. Please look for more information to come regarding a meeting in which your questions can be answered.

Thank you for your support.

Park Avenue Staff