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Executive Director
Gary Bowman, M.S. Ed.

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Dear CMP Families,

In our continuing effort to keep our families informed of recent trends in public education, I would like to provide some insight on the new national initiative for Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and how it will effect Montessori education for your child.

In June 2010, the National Governor's Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers, along with business and education groups, released Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts and Mathematics. The California Board of Education adopted CCSS in August, 2010. Currently, there are over 45 states that have agreed to adopt these standards. It is important to note that CMP's sponsoring districts (Sacramento City Unified, San Juan Unified, Buckeye Union, and Elk Grove Unified) have embraced CCSS and are in the process of implementing these standards.

Common Core was collaboratively developed to establish consistent and common expectations for all students regardless of the state where they reside. The CCSS is internationally benchmarked and therefore prepares students with the progression of knowledge and skills needed for success in college and other careers in our global economy and society.

Common Core complements Montessori philosophy seamlessly. Both empower students to:

- Demonstrate independence
- Build strong content knowledge across a wide range of subject matter
- Gain the ability to comprehend and apply knowledge
- Value evidence
- Understand other perspectives and cultures

In 2004, a group of CMP teachers came together and created the CMP Curriculum & Instruction Guide for all classroom teachers. This document aligned Montessori pedagogy with California State Standards. This curriculum guide impressed the American Montessori Society (AMS) as well as the Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC). Both accreditation agencies validated our alignment of Montessori and state standards.

During the 2012-2013 school year, CMP once again embarked on this thorough process of examining Montessori pedagogy and aligning it to the newly adopted Common Core Standards. Teams of teachers representing all campuses and all grade levels came together to review and revise the curriculum guide. One theme that emerged from this rigorous process was our realization of how much Montessori and Common Core share key elements.

Regardless of adopted state or national standards, the Montessori approach to education and the components of a Montessori classroom remain unchanged. The Montessori teacher will continue to:

- Facilitate student learning and foster independence at the student's pace
- Cater to different learning styles through Montessori materials
- Assess and monitor student progress by checking for comprehension and understanding
- Present individual and small group lessons based on student ability and learning differences
- Teach critical thinking to challenge students at all levels
- Allow for self-discovery and love of learning

The Montessori student is given the opportunity to:

- Demonstrate respect for self, others, and the environment
- Take ownership of learning
- Embody independence/self-confidence
- Take learning to a higher level (an abstract thinker with a strong concrete foundation)
- Apply leadership skills in various roles
- Demonstrate self-discipline

The desired results of a Montessori education are to prepare students to effectively lead in a global society. Collaboratively, with our campus communities, CMP will continue on this journey.

If you have any questions, please contact me or your campus administrator.

Sincerely,
Mickey Slamkowski

Director of Program
California Montessori Project