

Hugoton Middle School

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www.usd210.org

Mischel D. Miller, Principal
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Dear Parents/Guardians:

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Over the past few years we have seen many new programs introduced into our public schools. Many of these programs including “No Child Left Behind” required more accountability for student learning, however, they never defined what students were expected to learn. In some cases, this led to weakened standards and huge differences in expectations among states and regions of the country.

Educational and business leaders across the country recognized the need for common standards among the states. Thus the “Common Core State Standards Initiative” came into being. New standards were developed in collaboration with teachers, school administrators, and business leaders to provide a clear and consistent framework to prepare our children for college and the workforce. In October 2010, Kansas adopted these new K-12 Common Core State Standards for Mathematics and English / Language Arts (ELA), along with over 40 other states.

There has not been a more revolutionary school improvement program than that being undertaken with the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS). Implementation of these standards began in 2010. The transition process will be complete in 2014 with a new standards based assessment and full implementation.

Transition to the new ELA standards should not be difficult because the current Kansas State Standards have many similarities to the new CCSS. However, the new ELA Common Core requires more rigor, focuses on reading comprehension, and includes a heavier emphasis on writing, grammar, informational text, thinking skills, better instruction, and literacy across the curriculum.

Implementation of the new Common Core Standards for Mathematics will be more challenging for teachers, students, and parents as we adjust to not only new standards but also a new way of teaching and learning mathematics. The new standards do NOT isolate math skills into specific categories instead, math concepts are integrated with one another and taught based on a highly successful instructional model. This transition will be supported with our new textbook adoption. The increase in a rigorous math curriculum will be a challenge, but one that Hugoton’s math teachers are ready to meet. During **this transition year**, our teachers will undergo five days of professional development, to better understand and develop curricula to match the Common Core Standards.

Along with the new Common Core implementation, our state will be undergoing a change in assessment practices. These changes may cause growing pains and challenges; however, rest assured that all faculty and staff at Hugoton USD #210 will continue to do what is best for your student to achieve success.

For more information about the CCSS and the Kansas timelines for implementation, please go to the District Web Site (www.usd210.org) and click on Common Core State Standards under the District tab, or contact your school administration.

Sincerely,

Mischel D. Miller, Principal